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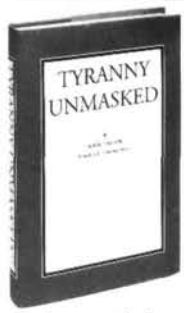

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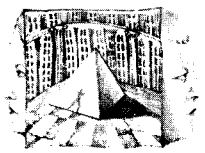

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Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

Vol. 17, No. 3 March 1993

On 'Boston University and Martin Luther King's Plagiarisms'

In his review of the first volume of *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr.* (Opinions, November 1992), Theodore Pappas errs in asserting that Boston University was part of the effort to "whitewash" the plagiarism in King's Ph. D. dissertation. Mr. Jon Westling, who was then president *ad interim* of the university, was among those who took the King papers' editor, Dr. Clayborne Carson, at his word when he said he and his colleagues had found no evidence of plagiarism in the dissertation.

The rumor that Dr. King plagiarized some unspecified part of his dissertation first reached the university in May 1990, when Professor John Shelton Reed sent the university a copy of what purported to be a forthcoming article in *Chronicles*. Even though the article offered no specifics, Jon Westling responded immediately by asking me to call Clayborne Carson. I did and reported Dr. Carson's unequivocal assurances that the rumor had no foundation in fact. Mr. Westling nonetheless followed up by contacting all the living members of Dr. King's dissertation committee, as well as other members of the faculty who taught Dr. King when he was a student at Boston University (1951-1955), and asking them if they had any idea what lay behind the rumor. Finally, he began the laborious process of reviewing the dissertation to search for instances of plagiarism from an unknown source.

The short-term result of these efforts was that we found nothing to contradict Dr. Carson's claims. Mr. Westling subsequently wrote back to Professor Reed and said that if he had specific evidence, he should reveal it, and if he didn't have evidence, he should refrain from making such serious allegations. Reed replied that he was withdrawing the article.

Four months later, with no further notice and without citing any evidence, *Chronicles* printed the still unsubstantiated rumor that Dr. King's dissertation was plagiarized. Mr. Westling subsequently wrote to your magazine with the facts as they then appeared. His letter explicitly said that "if you or anyone has evidence . . . it should be presented." Mr. Pappas now quotes that letter out of context to make it appear that Mr. Westling was among those willing to bend the truth to protect Dr. King's reputation. Mr. Pappas is fully aware of the actual sequence of events. His deliberate distortion of the record in this instance (and how many others?) taints his demand for a more forthright accounting of Dr. King's career as a plagiarist. His review is a reminder that there is more than one way to be intellectually dishonest.

—Peter Wood
Assistant Provost
Boston University

Mr. Pappas Replies:

Boston University has apparently learned nothing from its embarrassing correspondence of two years ago—when it sent for publication in the January 1991 *Chronicles* a letter claiming "not a single reader has ever found any nonattributed or misattributed quotations, misleading paraphrases, or thoughts borrowed without due scholarly reference in any of its [King's thesis] 343 pages."

I closed my January 1991 article with some simple logic, that no matter how this matter played out, B.U.'s reputation had been seriously damaged. B.U. officials either knew about King's pilfering and deliberately withheld the evidence or were incapable of detecting the plagiarisms in the first place and remained too incompetent to find them now. These were and still are the only two possible conclusions.

Thanks to Mr. Wood, we now know it was the latter. Apparently Jon Westling wasn't lying—he truly was incapable of finding the plagiarisms, even after "the laborious process of reviewing the dissertation," which produced "nothing to contradict Dr. Carson's claims." Mr. Wood apparently believes that he does his university credit by highlighting the ineptitude of its administration. How reassuring this defense must be to B.U. students and their parents, alumni and faculty.

Mr. Wood calls the job of detecting

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King's plagiarisms "laborious." To set the record straight, the task is nothing of the sort; the plagiarisms are so blatant that their detection is easy.

Rumors of King's plagiarisms and even of his prime source, Jack Boozer, had circulated in scholarly circles for many years. The London *Telegraph* had written about them two years earlier, in 1989. But even if Jon Westling didn't know about Boozer's thesis before he began his "laborious" investigation, King's principal source for his dissertation is nevertheless easy to ascertain. King acknowledges in his introduction, on page seven, that three years earlier at B.U. Boozer had written a "fine" thesis on the *same* subject of Paul Tillich and that he would cite it appropriately whenever he drew upon it. Even the most cursory perusal of King's footnotes is sufficient to see that King scarcely mentions Boozer at all.

Mr. Wood also denies that B.U. attempted to whitewash this issue. On the committee that B.U. President John Silber convened to analyze King's and Boozer's theses sat the university's "Martin Luther King Professor of Social Ethics," John Cartwright. After months on the committee supposedly analyzing the dissertations, and long after even Clayborne Carson had given up the charade and admitted that King's thesis was replete with "textual appropriations," B.U.'s professor of "social ethics" still publicly claimed that "there is no obvious indication in the dissertation that he [King] inappropriately utilized material." A better example of whitewashing could hardly be found.

It was B.U.'s reputation, not Mr. King's, that was riding on the committee's handling of this controversy. We all know what King did; the only question was whether B.U. as an institution devoted to the pursuit of truth would have the honesty and integrity to admit its mistakes and acknowledge King's wrongdoings. Mr. Wood tells us the answer is no.

On 'Communist Crimes'

I could not agree more with Murray N. Rothbard's commentary (Cultural Revolutions, October 1992) on the "glaring double standard" displayed by the Establishment in its treatment of Nazi and Communist state criminals. The asymmetry is so grotesque that even such an Establishment figure as Zbigniew Brzezinski broke ranks to complain of it. In December 1990 Brzezinski wrote:

> Hitler's crimes are still being justly punished. But in the Soviet Union there are literally thousands of ex-killers and ex-torturers living on official pensions, attending various revolutionary celebrations decked out in their medals, and perhaps even reminiscing about their struggle against "enemies of the people." Recently, several direct participants in the mass murder of the defenseless Polish officers in Katyn and elsewhere—15,000 of them shot one by one in the back of the head—have been identified. . . . The Eichmann of the operation, a former NKVD major by the name of Serepenko who was in charge of the "logistics" of the operation, lives comfortably in Moscow.

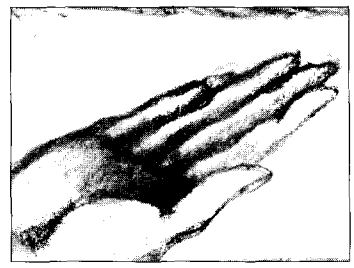
To take the case of the Soviet Union alone: Robert Conquest's estimate of 20 to 30 million killed in the Red terror is accepted by Roy Medvedev, Heller and Nekrich, Stephen Cohen, and others (Solzhenitsyn's estimate is considerably higher). Where is the cry to bring the surviving killers to justice? A few years ago, the whole world resounded with the infamy of Kurt Waldheim, who, while a lieutenant and translator with the *Wehrmacht*, was supposed to have had some knowledge of Nazi atrocities. Yet, on July 26, 1991, Lazar Moïsevich Kaganovich, the "Butcher of the Ukraine" during the terror-famine and the official in charge of the purges in the Moscow district in the mid-1930's, died in Moscow, peacefully in his bed.

Lip service, of course, is paid to the awful scale of Soviet atrocities, but powerful inhibitions stand in the way of drawing out their implications. One major reason is, as Professor Rothbard states, the latent sympathy of the leftist intellectual and media class for those who, whatever their faults, were basically fighting the good fight.

Another reason, however, has to do with the whole world of fairy tales that has come to surround World War II, "the last good war." Now, the fact is that the great majority of the victims of Soviet communism were killed *before* the Nazis undertook the massacre of the Jews and others and *before* Churchill and Roosevelt allied themselves with Stalin. Once granted that Stalin killed more people than Hitler, and killed them earlier, then what becomes of the Great Crusade, unparalleled in its pristine purity in all the annals of human conflict? And how does one prevent the opening of a host of other questions that the *bien pensants* have declared taboo for half a century, such as: Could the America Firsters have been right after all? Did Pius XII have good reason to be terrified of a Soviet inundation of Europe? Do all those who fought on the German side against the Red Army, for instance, the Slovaks led by Monsignor Jozef Tiso, deserve to be branded "Nazi puppets" while the Czech accomplices of Stalin led by Eduard Benes are honored as democratic heroes? And—the explosive question that began the German *Historikerstreit* of a few years ago—would the Nazi massacre of the Jews have occurred at all if the Communists had not been preaching and practicing the annihilation of whole classes of human beings for decades?

—Ralph Raico
Buffalo, NY

LIBERAL ARTS



IN SEARCH OF . . .

"A former typesetter at the *Jewish News* has sued the newspaper, saying her supervisor routinely made anti-Jewish remarks and told sexually suggestive jokes. Joy Gardin, 43, alleged in her suit . . . that she was fired from her part-time job when she complained. The paper's associate publisher, Arthur Horowitz, dismissed her claim, saying 'There is no anti-Semitism at the *Jewish News*.' Gardin, an Orthodox Jew, worked at the paper 11 years before she was fired in October."

—from the January 6
Chicago Tribune.

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SWITZERLAND has resisted the forces of centralization that seem to be sweeping Europe. Last December 6, in a referendum that was widely considered the country's most important since it established its confederation in 1848, Swiss voters rejected a plan to help form a 19-nation European Economic Area in which people, goods, capital, and services would have moved freely as of January 1, 1993. The referendum elicited the highest voter turnout (78 percent) since the 1947 plebiscite on adopting a social security system, thus delivering a resounding "no" to the idea of European union in spite of its consistent endorsement by the multiparty Swiss government. Perhaps there is hope that attachment to the European Community is still a long way off for this mountain nation of approximately 6 million (if not completely out of the question, as the "E.C. NEVER" graffiti on bridges outside its capital, Bern, would suggest).

Most Swiss politicians were—and still are—enthusiastic about participating with the 12 members of the EC and the other six members of the European Free Trade Association (Austria, Sweden, Finland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein) in the tariff-free trading zone. But approval of the EEA plan by the Swiss was an uphill battle from the start: despite the numerous concessions granted Switzerland in the negotiations that led to the signing of an EEA accord by EFTA members last April, anti-EC sentiment in the country remained strong. Switzerland's success in protecting its banking secrecy laws, its generous subsidies for farmers, and its limitations on the number of trucks that cross its Alpine roads was apparently small comfort for the Swiss people, who fear the effects of open borders and centralization. And it was the Swiss people who, under a constitutional provision that requires popular ratification of all laws and accords affecting the constitution, ultimately had the last word. Politicians in Switzerland had viewed participation in the EEA as a stepping stone to membership in the EC (for which they officially applied last spring). Yet they should have seen the low voter turnout (37 percent) in last May's referendum to approve their country's application for membership in the World Bank and the IMF as a sign that Swiss interest in joining the various international organizations is less than overwhelming—and that Swiss opposition to the EEA plan (not to mention EC membership) would be stiff.

But the EEA referendum did more than highlight popular opposition to the Swiss government's steps toward European union: it pointed up some interesting (and potentially grid-locking) divisions within the Swiss populace itself. While labor, industry, bankers, and the intelligentsia backed the government in its aggressive campaign on behalf of the EEA accord, farmers and small businessmen vehemently opposed the plan. The large corporations and less heavily subsidized farmers of the EC would present harsh competition to the 99 percent of Swiss plants that have fewer than 100 employees and to the Swiss livestock and dairy farmers whose products are subsidized to the tune of over $1 billion per year.

But deeper than the divisions between economic sectors is the apparent split between the different cultures that make up the Swiss confederation. For while the popular vote on the EEA scheme was close and somewhat ambiguous, with 50.3 percent against and 49.7 percent for, the cantonal vote (referendum rules require a majority of the country's 23 cantons to approve a measure for it to pass) sent a clearer message, with 16 (generally German-speaking) cantons voting "no," 7 (generally French-speaking) cantons "yes." Why the split among Switzerland's two major language groups? While the French-speaking minority favors closer ties with France and the rest of Europe, the German-speaking cantons are concerned that open borders may have destabilizing consequences, as in Germany in recent months. In effect, the immigration issue was perhaps the opposition's most effective card. Christoph Blocher, a German-speaking millionaire industrialist who is also a legislator for the conservative Swiss People's Party, used this card in leading the "no" campaign. "Europe has 15 million unemployed," he argued, "The French, the Portuguese, the Italians are going to work here. Salaries will go down, the quality of our products will fall, unemployment will rise."

As important as the immigration issue in determining the results of the referendum was a concern of a more political nature or, as René Felber, president of Switzerland's seven-member Federal Council, termed it, a "fear of big nations." The Swiss, who have a proud history of rejecting closer international links (as when they voted three to one against joining the United Nations in 1986), carefully guard both their national sovereignty and their particular form of grass-roots democracy in which the federal government has little power and citizens have the right to vote (after petitioning the government with 50,000 signatures) on any issue. This peculiar political system was directly threatened by the EEA accord, which gives the EC final say on all laws, even those that affect EFTA members. The Swiss were worried that, in signing on through the accord to the EC's so-called "*Acquis Communautaire*" (some 40,000 pages of regulations), they would see a transfer of their decision-making powers to Brussels. Such a cession of sovereignty would mean (posit Michel Legris and Jean-Marc Gonin in a 1989 article for *L'Express*) that 16 of the 76 federal referenda held in Switzerland from 1977 to 1985 would have fallen under the authority of the EC's ruling body, the European Commission. The Swiss, in short, were not ready to stomach such a gross usurpation of their powers.

Their caution parallels the growing skepticism of many Europeans toward union. The Swiss vote may have only slowed participation of the other EFTA members in the new and expanded common market, but it had a significant psychological effect on the rest of Europe. Following on the heels of the Danish rejection and the narrow French ratification of the Maastricht treaty last year, the Swiss "no" underlined the uncertainty of the EC's future.

Yet pro-EC politicians, even in Switzerland, continue to press on. Reaction among members of the Swiss government to the referendum comprised a mixture of regret, reproof, and dogged persistence in the face of defeat. René Felber, who expressed his disappointment by calling the rupture between the federal authorities and the people "grave," went on to argue for continued overtures on the part of

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Switzerland toward the EC: "It is of course necessary, and it will not be easy, to restore the confidence that all the countries of Europe accorded our country on the path to the interdependent construction of the Europe of tomorrow." Swiss politicians and business leaders had contended that their country could not afford to remain outside a unifying Europe, and they remained hopeful up until the day of the election that voters would agree. Back in 1991, Ursus Jaeggi, director of government affairs at Du Pont Europe in Geneva, was arguing that the Swiss would eventually ratify the EEA pact. His confidence—ironically—was based on a belief that "the man in the street has more insight than some of our political leaders." Perhaps he does.

—*Christine Haynes*

GAMBLING is a fool's pastime, and a fool and his money will soon be parted like the proverb says, but gambling is also a disease. It's in this capacity, as a sick person, that I beg all you councilmen and -women, elected officials and public representatives, not to bring this infectious scourge into your communities.

It's too late for us here in Louisiana. The state has approved gambling, and New Orleans is just now poised on the verge of allowing the building of a mammoth fleece-the-suckers parlor that would put Vegas to shame. It would comprise acres of Mississippi River-front property dotted with defrauding instruments and easy seams. The proposal envisions, of course, great economic development in the shadow of this gargantuan thieves' den. I suggest that one inevitable development will be franchises of Dr. Kevorkian Suicide Parlors for the growing multitudes of the destitute. New Orleans has also approved riverboat gambling, which should give the town back its merry cutthroat reputation of the last century, and poker machines, which will insure that entire welfare checks get spent to the last nickel.

I know wherefrom I speak. Every time I sat before a blackjack dealer in Vegas, Reno, or Budapest, I had the sublime experience of working for most of the night in order to lose everything in my pockets. Happily, I never had much to lose. But the work it took! Like a guy next to me said in Reno while actually winning, "If they paid me this lousy per hour to work out there I would tell them where to shove it!"

Unfortunately, there is no "out there" for the gambler, only a sick, neon-lit, cigarette-smoke-filled eternal "in there," where time has stopped and nothing interrupts the hypnotic labor except utter destitution. Ask Dostoyevsky. There is no such thing as "gambling for fun." That's what all the junkies say. They also say that they can quit any time. Don't believe them. And leave your dough in your pillow next time you visit. You don't yet know what it means to really miss New Orleans.

—*Andrei Codrescu*

THE SCHWINN BICYCLE Company, which was run by the same family for 97 years, has gone bankrupt. No more Schwinn bikes? I remember mine, and brother Jack's, and those I bought my children in the 50's—visions of delight with their balloon tires, chrome springs, and coaster brakes. The last of my four children actually got the "Phantom" model—I got a raise that Christmas. It was the Cadillac of bikes: electric horn, luggage rack, whitewall tires, and mud flaps with reflectors. It could go anywhere and awe anyone. It was as strong as Superman and as ready to meet every challenge.

Not only will there be no more Schwinns, but as we enter the Clinton Era there also will be no more Superman. Beat the drums slowly and lower the flag to half-mast. Superman died last November in DC Comics' issue number 75. The Man of Steel, doomed to the junkyard.

The message is plain. The age of super-bikes and Superman is ending. We are no longer invariably Number One, but one among many. All that goes up comes down. That need not frighten us. As the old Quaker Hymn puts it: "And when you get to a place just right / 'Twill be the garden of love and delight."

The election—and the Democratic victory—gives some people new hope, just as it gives us a new generation of leaders. After looking at the White House through the iron gate for 12 years, the baby-boomers can go inside and get to work. We expect no miracles—they play well in Disney World and Hollywood, but not in Washington. The Democrats have been good at proposing new starts—and at finding apt labels for them. Wilson promised a "New Freedom," Roosevelt a "New Deal," Kennedy a "New Frontier," and Johnson a "Great Society." What's new with you, Bill Clinton?

The next few months will give us his answer. But whatever it is, we are on the brink of two things that are inescapably new—a new century and a new millennium. Before the Clinton Crew leaves the White House (if they enjoy a second term) we will reach the year 2000 A.D.—a magic moment in time to summarize the last thousand years and envision the thousand now to come. It is the ritual death and rebirth of history. The new millennium will dawn on a planet that describes itself as a global electronic village, ending a century in which people have witnessed more change than any who ever lived. The thought makes even journalists wax poetic. Lance Morrow writes in *Time*: "Almost every human intelligence will be focused for an instant in a solidarity of collective wonder and vulnerability—Mystery in the Age of Information."

Where will the United States be at that moment, when we usher in the new year at midnight, 1999 A.D.? Will we still be playing the Number One game? Will we still be putting our big bucks into the military and social services? Will the rich still be getting richer and the poor poorer? We now know that the global economy, instead of eliminating poverty, has widened the gap between rich and poor nations. Will we reduce the gap with a new consensus—or with a series of revolutions and wars?

Of course, in a new millennium, we must face a new reality. That won't be easy. As T. S. Eliot writes in *Burnt Norton*: "Human kind / Cannot bear very much reality." But if we are to hold our own in the new age to come, we must yet act in this one. That is the great central message of the election of 1992.

—*Marshall W. Fishwick*

NEW JERSEY children better hold tight to their allowances because those legislative nannies in the Garden State are at it again. As of last July, kids under 13 who ride their bicycles without wearing a helmet are breaking the law. First-time offenders pay $25 to the state; second-time offenders pay $100. To a child, that can mean a lot of lawns mowed and a lot of newspapers delivered.

The Kiddie Helmet Law comes on

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the heels of one of the most infamous products of modern-day legislation: New Jersey's law forbidding restaurants from serving runny eggs. While public scorn caused the Runny Eggs Law to be repealed, there is no word yet on whether New Jersey intends to mandate chewing food properly and eating all of one's peas.

But don't be surprised if New Jersey passes some such thing as The Proper Rumination and Legume Act of 1993, as long as Governor Jim Florio is in the State House—he's a classic example of a big-government, tax-and-spend Democrat. After picking up the keys to Drumthwacket, New Jersey's palatial governor's mansion, King James the Profligate immediately raised taxes to unprecedented heights. While outrage within New Jersey was immediate and severe, one of the big-city liberal newspapers from out of state that loves to comment on events across the river—the *New York Times*—hailed the king as a new breed of cutting-edge Democrat and chastised New York Governor Mario Cuomo for being too timid in his efforts to stuff state coffers. But like the historical Jacobites, the *New York Times* underestimated political opposition to its darling sovereign: Florio faces a recently elected, veto-proof Republican majority in both houses and almost certain defeat in 1994. Given Florio's contempt for the masses, perhaps "Jacobins" might be a more fitting term for his supporters—and what better name for an administrative body charged with enforcing the Kiddie Helmet Law than the "Committee of Public Safety"?

Not surprisingly, another big-city liberal newspaper that loves to comment on events across the river—the *Philadelphia Inquirer*—waxed rhapsodic about the Kiddie Helmet Law and the coercive power of Big Brother. "Can't make your kids protect their little heads?" said the *Inquirer*, "Well, maybe the State can." The *Inquirer* shrugged off the cost of a helmet to parents—from $20 to $45, with some helmets costing over $100—and concluded its puff piece by quoting a Kiddie Helmet Law advocate, revealing the mischievous and intrusive mindset of those who are behind such laws: after the meddling gent finishes telling parents of kids who bike about the horrors of riding without a helmet, he "always tell[s] parents of kids in high school that it's more important to get the kids to wear condoms." Today bicycle helmets, tomorrow condoms, all in the name of public safety.

From the parents' perspective, the law is an excessive intrusion of their authority to weigh and determine what activities their children can engage in and what steps their children should take to avoid injury. The Kiddie Helmet Law usurps that role, and does so in a manifestly silly fashion: common experience with kids and bikes clearly shows that the remote incidence of serious harm is greatly outweighed by the inconvenience to thousands upon thousands of children. Kids are on and off bikes ten times a minute, and requiring them to strap on a helmet every time, under penalty of losing the equivalent of, say, a fairly generous First Communion gift, is coercive out of all proportion to the risk of harm. While there may be parents who want to make their kids wear helmets out of an excess of caution, that's their business. But excessive caution should not be mandated by the state.

More important than the objections of parents is the effect on those to be governed by the law: New Jersey's children. Children have a very strong sense of justice, and they do not yet understand that it is their destiny, after years of incessant state and federal nagging, to become cowed into complying with the most petty, intrusive, and ultimately numbing laws—from strapping on seatbelts to eating overcooked eggs. While children do not always know what is good for them, there is not a kid in New Jersey who doesn't know that this law is dumb. If these kids sense that their parents also think the regulation is inane, then they will not only lose respect for the rule of law, but they will lose respect for their impotent parents, who are charged with enforcing such nonsense in their household. More likely than not, children will simply disobey the law, which will effectively make these impressionable young citizens outlaws. To a child, a stupid law is no law at all. If a child is caught and punished under a law that even his parents believe is unjust, the undesirable civics lesson will be even more pronounced.

Of course, this act will have some value in teaching our children about the true nature of law in American society. Some lucky child may grow up to discover the astute legal philosophies of our Western culture—although the odds of a child learning this at public school, where education has been replaced with building self-esteem and paying obeisance to a Culture-of-the-Month, are slim. As the child learns about law, he may recognize that the teachings of Aquinas and Augustine imply that the ill-advised Kiddie Helmet Law failed to bind his conscience and was thus an unjust intrusion of his sovereign will; he may also see his violations of the law as a predictable consequence of human nature when faced with an unjust set of commands. He will then realize what he did not understand in his youth: the legislators in New Jersey who passed the Kiddie Helmet Law possessed as much wisdom as a 10-year-old child. Welcome to America, kid.

—*T. Padraig Higgins*

NEWCOMERS TO ARIZONA, among whom I count myself, are sometimes startled to discover just how liberal are the gun laws in one of the nation's most conservative states. As long as it's not concealed, carrying a gun is almost as acceptable to Arizonans as a saguaro cactus—although businesses may ask you to check your weapon at the door. Not that that many people actually do walk around carrying firearms in holsters, but you get the picture: little stands in the way of letting gun owners enjoy their constitutionally protected right to bear arms. Except parental permission to carry a firearm.

Anticipating a summer of drive-by shootings, not to mention the tragedies that invariably occur when loaded weapons are left around a house, the city of Phoenix decided last May that it was time—as government is wont to do—to *do something*. And this bit of governmental micromanagement, despite the hoots of gun enthusiasts, was catching. Once Phoenix passed its ordinance requiring teenagers to have written permission from their parents to carry a firearm, a host of other cities in "the Valley," meaning the Phoenix metropolitan area, also jumped in. So did Tucson, which almost never would do something as distasteful as follow Phoenix's lead. Such a flurry of antigun activity sent Bob Corbin, formerly Arizona's attorney general and now president of the National Rifle Association, straight up the wall and then into court, where he recently challenged the parental-permission ordinances as a violation of existing Arizona gun laws.

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There the matter will linger for awhile. In the meantime, it's questionable if the laws are any more than feel-good responses to a societal problem that is rapidly getting out of hand. Almost half of the police officers who patrol beats or work with juveniles in the state's largest city told a pollster that the Phoenix ordinance was ineffective. One thing's for certain: the killing goes on.

This morning, my copy of the *Arizona Republic* told the pathetic tale of a Tempe father who, in a bit of drunken horseplay with his 16-year-old son, shot the boy dead with a 9-mm pistol. The father, sitting in a police car, was quoted as mumbling, "Oh no, my baby, not my baby." Such a tragedy might have made page one except for one thing: it is getting to be rather common. The really big accidental shooting stories are usually when a 5-year-old discharges a shotgun into a 3-year-old sister's face.

The public, particularly that segment that writes letters to the editor and calls radio talk shows, is naturally outraged. So besides the parental-permission ordinances, a host of other well-meaning if not well-thought-out proposals have been floated to *do something*—most notably for gun-safety programs to be implemented in the public schools (a certain waste of already strained school resources and probably about as effective as condom distribution in stemming teenage pregnancies and the spread of AIDS).

Sad as the aforementioned incidents are, the outrage seems misdirected. And so does the response. Even defenders of the parental-permission ordinances admit that what they are really trying to do is halt violence among the proliferating number of gangs usually found in sociologically downscale ethnic neighborhoods. These "gang-bangers," men-children who kill as part of a ritual of initiation or for whatever reason turns them on, can hardly differentiate a gun from a spray-paint can: both are used as weapons of destruction—push a spray-can nozzle and destroy a neighborhood with graffiti; pull a trigger and destroy a life.

Add these "kids" to the normal assortment of contract killers, drug-runners, outlaw bikers, and general scum who use guns for illegal means and one could naturally wonder what in the world is accomplished by asking some teenager on his way hunting or to target practice whether he has written permission from Mom and Dad to carry his weapon. Having become a society that now accepts that criminals are coddled, even in some cases demands that they be more coddled, we look for relief by trying to change behavior—our own, that is.

Granted, it seems that a parent wouldn't object to giving a child permission to carry that firearm out to the rifle range. Sensible? Yes. But without that slip, the kid and the parent both become lawbreakers. Wouldn't it make more sense to write laws that send criminals who perpetrate firearm-related crimes to prison for a long time, maybe throw away the keys? If we really were so serious about punishing heinous criminals who torture and murder their victims, wouldn't we quit debating (and endlessly appealing) death-penalty cases and begin the executions? But Americans, even Arizonans, have little taste or conditioning for such Draconian measures. So the gang-bangers, who wouldn't ask their fathers for written permission to carry an Uzi even if they knew who their fathers were, will go on terrorizing their neighborhoods. And we will go on cowering from them.

I have never owned a gun and never plan to. I have never been hunting and, due to a rather big and easily spooked Labrador retriever with a loud bark and plenty of teeth, I feel safe in my home. Still, in a nation fascinated with the *haute couture* of designer laws rather than blanket justice, it seems that silly slogan—"when guns are outlawed only outlaws will have guns"—is on its way to becoming a self-fulfilling prophecy.

—James Hill

LIBERAL ARTS

GREEK SHRIEK ART

"What to make of performance artist Diamanda Galas? Her pieces are theatrical assaults. Her voice is often piercing (or sometimes droning), beyond what most deem listenable. She's preoccupied with Greek culture (especially the church), human disorders and AIDS. It's safe to say that her act isn't for everyone. Galas socks you in the head and stomach simultaneously with ideas, sounds and visual stimuli. Her Plague Mass, a scorching stage missive, intensely dissected societal views of AIDS. Part of Galas' performance entailed her pouring blood over her body while chanting church litany. Now she's doing a piece called Vena Cava, which focuses on the virus's victims and the suffering they endure, in particular the related illnesses of depression and dementia. It's played New York's experimental theater, The Kitchen, to rousing reviews. One writer described the piece as 'an hour-long mad scene.' Sounds like Diamanda dares us again."

—by Deni Kasrel, in the January 6, 1993, issue of Welcomat.

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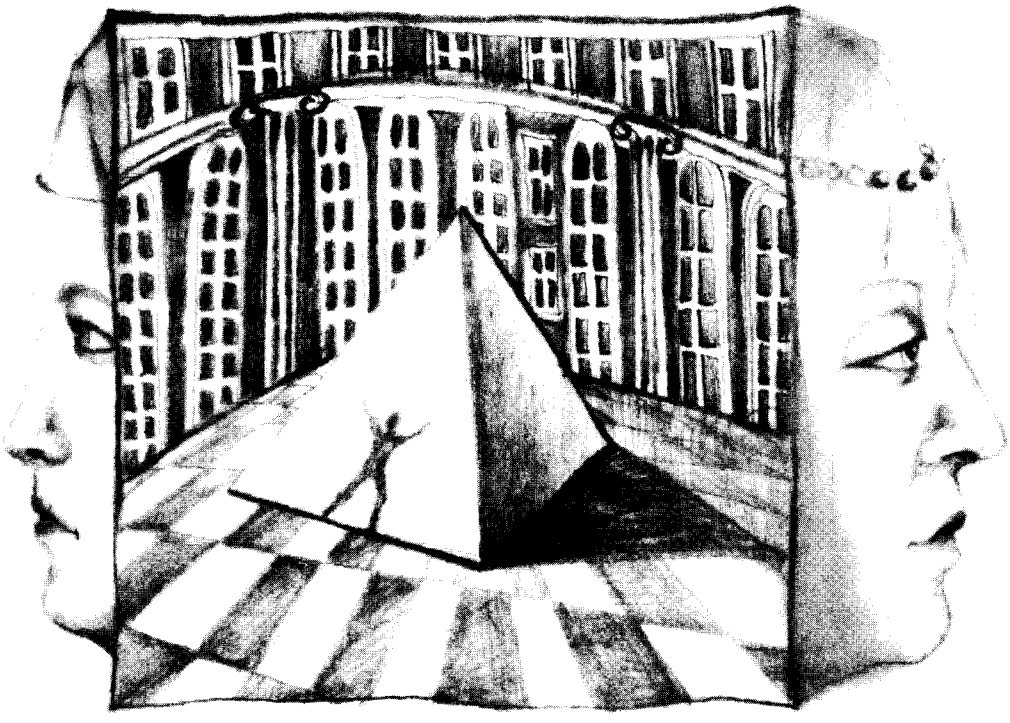

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Rag and Bone Shops of the Mind

by Thomas Fleming

I dislike museums, even good ones, and I positively detest the culture warehouses of Paris, London, and New York—the so-called encyclopedic museums, in which I have spent some of the least edifying moments of adult life. I have waited in line, more than once, to get into the Uffizi. I manage to avoid the swarms of gaping Japanese tourists following the magic talisman of the lifted umbrella, only to be trampled upon by herds of half-naked American refugees in their Hard Rock Cafe T-shirts. Rather than abandon hope, I do not enter. Florence is Dante's city, and it would take a modern Dante to do justice to what his city has become.

I cannot personally testify to the horrors inside the Uffizi, but I have trudged wearily, from picture to famous picture, through the Louvre. Someone—I assume it is the Marxist minister of culture, Jack Lang—conceived the brilliant idea of forcing visitors to enter through Pei's ugly and discordant glass pyramid—a Chinese middle finger stuck in the face of European civilization. The real excitement of the Louvre is the stampede of children and tour groups running at breakneck speed to see some masterpiece rumored to be only a half-mile away. I am surprised they do not provide golf carts: perhaps these do not go fast enough.

A poor hick like me waits all his life to see the *Winged Victory* or the *Venus of Melos*, and when he gets there, all he can think of is how to find Barnum's famous exhibit marked "Egress." The Japanese are everywhere, snapping pictures in front of the "No Flash Photos" sign. When I point this out to a Frenchman, he observes that they probably do not speak French. He is right. The Japanese swarm all over Europe trying out their impossible English on Italian train conductors and French waiters. In their behavior, Japanese tourists are worse than the Germans, worse even than the Americans, and I wonder that the governments of these nations are willing to send these ambassadors of ill will and bad taste abroad.

There are many great museums I have not yet visited, but I am willing to bet that the worst spot in any of them is the Sistine Chapel. First-time visitors are always given the same advice by their more experienced friends: go fairly early and make a beeline to the Sistine Chapel—do not even so much as glance at the various collections of sculpture and artifacts along the way. Unfortunately, the same advice is given in all the guidebooks that promise 15 European cities in two weeks on $50 a day, and when you get to the Chapel, it is more like a high school gymnasium during the state finals. You cannot see for all the noise.

Earlier in this century a noted reactionary declared that the only way to save civilization was to ban tourists. Note, he did not say visitors, but tourists, people making an obligatory round of visits according to someone else's plan. There are, of course, tours and *tours*. Archeological sites in Sicily or Greece are more accessible to specialized tour groups, but most tours offer a McDonald's approach to travel: the same bland experience reduplicated millions of times for people too busy to notice what they are consuming.

One of my Italian friends told me that tourists have occasionally sued a travel agency, claiming they never saw the

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Leaning Tower or St. Mark's, but tour operators have come up with the solution: a list of notable attractions to be signed at the end of the day by each weary pilgrim. Why do they go? The footsore group sprawled at the foot of the Spanish Steps looks about as happy as 13-year-old boys at their first dance. "Am I having a good time yet?"

Americans always assume they are being cheated by crooked foreigners. Usually the problem is language, since many of our fellow countrymen speak no written language. "The Frogs and Dagos always cheat you," they say, expressing a contempt that almost justifies the swindles. Serving tourists is not an easy business. The profit margin is low, and the usual recipe for success—good food and service—does not apply to grazing animals on a cattle drive. The French do not believe the customer is always right—a petty and servile notion, beneath the dignity of a man who owns his own business—but their own standard—the best, whether the customer wants it or not—gives way to "Head 'em up, move 'em out" when large groups of one-time visitors are involved.

I remember sitting outdoors in a pleasant *trattoria* in Lucca. The food was good, the service a bit slow but friendly. Inside, however, a German horde was being whipped through identical courses, while the guide got into a shouting match with the proprietor. I can only assume that the Germans took home mixed memories of Lucca. When I have compared notes with friends who have taken tours, I am always surprised by how disgruntled they are by bad service, poor food, and a general sense of disorientation. Of course they are disoriented, when they are being processed by an impersonal machine that stamps each diverse individual into the same mold.

Our lives are our own, and any grown-up who is not an invalid ought to be prepared to find his own way through a foreign city. Getting lost is half the experience, as I kept telling my daughter in London, where we wandered lost for hours, only to be washed up on the shore of Buckingham Palace. When you know exactly where you are on the map and can check to see if the guidebook description matches what is in front of you, it is someone else's perception, not yours. Out of ignorance and ineptitude, I have often found myself wondering at the beauties of some undiscovered church, only to find, back in the hotel, that it is celebrated in the *Guide Bleu*. In Rome, I stumbled onto Santa Maria Maggiore in search of a drugstore and peeked into San Luigi for the first time because the pizzeria was not open yet.

I am probably misleading my readers into thinking that I play everything by ear. On the contrary, I bore my wife and children, months before a trip, reading histories and guidebooks, studying maps and city plans. Like Henry Reed, I have pored over "A Map of Verona":

> And over this city for a whole long winter season,
> Through streets on a map, my thoughts have
> hovered and paced.

But these are private and personal preparations, like language study, and guidebooks are the dictionaries and grammars of travel: useful for study in advance and for checking points, but as impractical for conversation with places as with people. Ultimately, your goal is to break free and see things for yourself.

This is truer of museums than of cities. I cannot say how many times I have been standing alone in a room at Chicago's Art Institute or the National Gallery in Washington, only to be set upon by a train of trouser-clad housewives, each carrying a folding chair. Their lector marches them right in front of the very picture I am looking at and proceeds to deliver a discourse that is half platitude and more than half error (platitudes are sometimes wrong). These women are not little maids from school; they are battle-hardened veterans of marriage and motherhood. Can't they look, with their own eyes, at a picture? And if they cannot, what are they doing in a museum?

It is better to be an ignoramus on your own terms than the parrot of a half-trained semiprofessional. (I am not, of course, speaking of the excellent guides who give tours of manor houses, palaces, and special collections that are as useful to the art historian as to the school girl, but of the pre-chewed pap spat into the mouths of tour-takers.)

The mischief of arts education began in the 18th century, when it was no longer enough to cultivate an appreciation for the beautiful. Great museums were established to serve as educational institutions inculcating lofty principles. In his will that conferred the original core of the British Museum, Dr. Hans Sloane declared that his collection should be open to the public "for the improvement of the Arts and Sciences and the benefit of mankind." But it was the Germans, following Winckelmann's lead, who most insisted upon rational and scientific display of art—first the ancients and only later the moderns—for instructional purposes.

Earlier collections had been assembled haphazardly by kings, noblemen, and princes of the Church to gratify their tastes and impress their friends, but increasingly museums became national foundations, arranged on a scientific basis, for the edification of the populace, and what could possibly be more edifying than a demonstration of the power and glory of the nation and its rulers?

The Louvre, which had been a royal palace before the Revolution, was turned into a grisly display of art treasures that had been looted from the homes of murdered aristocrats. As the armies of the Republic and of the Empire ravaged their way across Europe, the masterpieces of half the world were carted off to France as spoils of war and put on display in the Palais du Louvre, renamed the Muséum National and, in 1803, the Musée Napoléon.

After Waterloo, the liberated provinces of Napoleon's Empire recovered much of the loot, but some of the works of art went not to the original owners but to the royal, papal, and national art museums that were being established or reorganized. The museum became the symbol of nationhood and empire, and the imperial nations of the French, the Germans, and the British displayed their trophies of ancient art—much of it looted from sites in Greece, Turkey, Egypt, and Italy—as proof of their own status as successors to the Roman Empire. One of the first acts of newly independent Greece was to demand the Elgin Marbles back. Those demands have been repeated throughout the years, but Britain retains just enough imperial spirit (or is it spite?) to refuse.

Americans, for obvious reasons, were somewhat slow in founding great museums. The earlier foundations tended to resemble the Charleston Library Society's collection of curios that constituted the first museum in America (1773). So long as America remained a republic, its museums were very modest affairs and not merely because of the difficulties and

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the expense of importing art. Our plain republican ancestors were, for the most part, fully employed in building their own civilization on classical models. Let the Europeans worship their ancestors. Our aristocrats were investing their energies into descendants. The connoisseurs among them were gentleman dilettantes who did not confound private taste with public good.

One of the first American promoters of connoisseurship, James Jackson Jarves, was also a collector who called for the creation of public art museums in which "a mental and artistic history of the world may be spread out like a chart before the student." Jarves's *The Art-Idea* was published in 1864, on the eve of the nation's metamorphosis from republic into empire, and, "by the time of his death in 1888 [as Karl Meyer notes in *The Art Museum: Power, Money, Ethics*], he had witnessed the first-fruits of his art-idea: a half dozen new art museums, most of them open without an admission fee, each of them determined to rival the Louvre in the scope of its collection."

A museum is no place in which to look at paintings. Like the European tour, the great museum is a fast-food experience, programmed, packaged, and ultimately stultifying.

The Metropolitan Museum in New York, the greatest of American museums, was established only five years after the war. The founders were—appropriately enough—members of the Union League, but the Museum's greatest benefactor was J. Pierpont Morgan, the living embodiment of the best and the worst the nation had become during the Gilded Age: a brilliant corporate raider, Morgan had little aptitude for running a company or making anything but money. A "pious Episcopalian" in an age that did not require these quotation marks, he bribed politicians and lavished money on his mistresses. An educated gentleman by New England standards, he cultivated the arts by spending top dollar on relics of a previous generation's fashions. The Met of recent years, with its vulgar huckstering, suspicious business practices, and pretentious hypocrisy, really is the fulfillment of its patron's character.

The Metropolitan became temporarily famous under the reign of director Thomas Hoving and his team of professional art vandals. Hoving cashed in the Met's unparalleled collection of ancient coins and sold off major works in order to stage his publicity coups. The greatest of his stunts, the acquisition of a Greek vase looted from Italy, was Hoving's downfall, but most of the great museums of the United States routinely waste their scarce resources on blockbuster exhibitions that have all the good taste of a Hollywood opening. The crowds come in to gawk at the famous pictures in the same way they would gawk at Bruce Willis or David Letterman if they made an appearance at the mall.

The Met, which during its over-frequent special exhibits can be as nightmarish as the Louvre, has the broadest and deepest collection of art in the New World. To me, it has always seemed an ugly place, dingy and soiled, to house so much beauty—a Greek revival bordello that has seen too much business. From its collection of ancient vases and sculpture (not so good as the British Museum's) to its great Impressionists (inferior, in my opinion, to the Art Institute's, to say nothing of the D'Orsay's), the Met represents, far better than the National Gallery, the American claim to be an imperial civilization.

Museums are an exercise in cultural self-definition, and the Met's newer collections of Native American bric-a-brac, African primitives, and contemporary junk are attempts to redefine America as something other than a purely European colony. Nothing, by the way, gives a better indication of our failure than the creeping Third Worldism that has infected the West's educated classes since the late 18th century, when oriental art was all the rage. There was, however, some excuse for an imperial nation falling for *chinoiserie*. While "I do not long for all one sees that's Japanese," Chinese and Japanese porcelains are undeniably beautiful artifacts of high civilizations. The best I can say of most native primitives is that they are no uglier than most contemporary art. (Much of Third World art is so bad, it might have been supported by NEA grants.)

A museum is no place in which to look at paintings. Like the European tour, the great museum is a fast-food experience, programmed, packaged, and ultimately stultifying. It is better to see two or three good paintings in a single poorly lit church than to walk through a long cafeteria line of masterpieces. Museums, in general, are places to put dead things in: dinosaur fossils and grave goods, and works of art that were once bursting with life are buried in the clean, well-lighted catacombs of the National Gallery.

An indefatigable museum-goer might agree with the general principle. "But where," he (more likely she) will ask, "could we see these things, if there were no museums? Most of us do not count Gettys and Morgans and Guggenheims among our acquaintances." In the first place, I shall try to explain, art for the masses is an entirely bourgeois idea. Imitating the taste and manners of the old aristocracies, the commercial classes were forced to democratize their principles to avoid being taken for parvenus. The bourgeoisie always spoke for the nation, when it was claiming a privilege. In setting up the great national museums, the goal was to acquire a veneer of culture on the cheap.

The masses may have been indoctrinated into thinking they want art for their children, but for themselves, they prefer *Married With Children* or Eddie Murphy goes Disney. A vital civilization is marked by a certain populism. Greek tragedy, Jacobean drama, Italian opera all had broad appeal. In more degenerate ages, a serious devotion to painting and music has always been confined to small groups, and for the real enthusiast, obstacles to gratification only intensify his passion and his pleasure.

The opposite of the tour is the pilgrimage. Nineteen ninety-two was the 500th anniversary not only of Columbus' discovery of the New World but also of the death of Piero della Francesca. Not terribly well-known in his own life and subsequently ignored, Piero came into his own in the late 19th century. In recent years large numbers of art-lovers have made the "Piero pilgrimage" so famous that it has even reached the notice of the *Smithsonian* magazine (December 1992). Although some of Piero's paintings can be found in London's

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The Generations of the Leaves

by John Senior

Time, at thirty, turned us rightside out.
Oh, kept a memory that still could squeeze
some Housman from the school anthologies,
accommodating ills, as hopes delayed,
to settle for the ways that things are made,
against the rowdy Beatific rout
of those who took the journey down and out,
rutting with the pigs in Circe's cavern
and One-Eyed Riley at the West End Tavern.
We found responsibility restrains
and overpumping of the heart blows brains,
discovering in many a fiscal joust
the chivalry of payments on the house:
Money more than malt or Milton can
justify God's ways to businessmen.

His name is now a Scholarship. I guess
he left a little something for the College.
How we sneered at profit and success
back then when just to be alive was knowledge,
some of which we did attain, but less,
alas, than constellated fame affords—
him least; yet once with what sweet nobleness
he soared (perhaps it turned the Fates contrary)
standing on the steps of Low Library
reading in the Greek those wingèd words,
golden helmeted with golden greaves,
splendid in his hopes, in battle green—
white clouds of April race across the plain:
"Why ask my lineage? The lives of men
are like the generations of the leaves."
And we saw angels whipping worlds like tops
to make that painful crying of the spheres
and Glaucus, started on the great stone steps,
spinning, locked in ecstasy with stars.

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National Gallery, in the Louvre, or in the Frick in New York, many of his greatest works remain in small Tuscan towns, hence the need for a pilgrimage.

I don't know what the motives of these pilgrims might be—the desire to commemorate an anniversary or to perform homage to fashion or even to see beautiful pictures—but last September I ran into quiet and serious people—German, for the most part, but also English and Italian. My own "pilgrimage" was sheer accident. A friend insisted upon taking me to see the Madonna del Parto in Monterchi. Monterchi was the hometown of Piero's mother, and it is typical of this painter that one of his most interesting works was stuck off in a rustic chapel. The painting—whose poor state of preservation is the result of its exposure to the weather for many long years—is a very unusual depiction of the pregnant Madonna under a sort of pavilion. Two angels pulling back the curtains suggest a revelation, a theme that seems to be echoed by the Virgin herself, fingering a sort of slash or gusset in the front of her dress that hints at the mystery swelling beneath the folds. The painting is now housed in a separate building, where studies are being conducted toward an eventual restoration. From Monterchi, I went to Borgo Sansepolcro, Piero's native town, where the local *museo civico*—in addition to its fine permanent collection of his own works—featured the works of his students and colleagues.

At one point in my travels I spoke with a sullen young lady who stood ostentatiously outside a museum, displaying a contempt for art that was tiresome in Mark Twain 100 years ago. As a good American college kid, she found all this reverence for pictures vaguely disgusting and did not hesitate to say so. So much for the liberal arts education.

In a nutshell, here was the conflict between the old bourgeoisie and the new middle class, which in North America passes for an aristocracy. The American elite and its children are pampered barbarians who lack the patience and discipline that are needed to do anything for its own sake; they are white trash with six figure incomes, and four years at Harvard or Yale or St. John's do little to wean them from the culture of jeans, fast food, and commercial music. They have the money to afford two weeks in Paris at a hotel where they never need to hear a word of French spoken, and when they return, they can only bring back purchases, not experiences. Earlier empires trained imperial classes to enjoy, while administering, the provinces. Ours cannot write standard English, learn a foreign language, or keep their trousers zipped.

A week or so later I found myself, for no good reason, in Arezzo, which happens to be home to the church of San Francesco, whose walls are adorned with the greatest frescoes painted by Piero della Francesca or, indeed, by anyone. It was only in Arezzo that I realized that I had become, like so many others, a pilgrim eager to seek out the odd places where Piero's works are found. I even intend to accept the next invitation to New York in order to see his paintings in the Frick, one of the most pleasant museums in the United States.

I realize in looking back over the years that I have most enjoyed my time in small museums, particularly the jumbled collections of local antiquities in which the visitor has to play explorer in an uncharted wilderness. I have never acquired a taste for Etruscan art, but the museum in Chiusi is a wonderful place to appreciate that race of gloomy hedonists. The Ashmolean in Oxford is justly famous for its Attic vases, and I think I enjoyed the mediocre collection in Orvieto even more. Here in the States my favorite museums include the Taft in Cincinnati, the old Taft mansion that holds the family's collection of furniture and paintings. (It has been years, but I remember Sargent's beautiful portrait of Robert Louis Stevenson.) On a grander scale, the Freer in Washington, with its Whistler room and collection of Chinese art, is a wonderful place to waste a rainy day, and when I lived in San Francisco I used to spend hours in the Legion of Honor, as much for the location and grounds as for the collection. (Grudgingly, I have to concede that on weekday mornings, there is a quiet dignity to the old section of the National Gallery in Washington.)

The best museums, however, are quirky, local, and unplanned, naively reflecting the taste of generations of collectors. Apart from the Sistine Chapel, the Vatican is worth a visit. Despite the pretense of organization, the Vatican's museums are the papacy's vast lumber room. There are miles of second-rate Roman copies of Greek sculpture that impress us with the tedium of empire, while arousing our envy for the high level of mediocrity the Romans achieved in their commercial art.

The fact remains that no one interested in art can avoid the Louvre or the Met or even the Uffizi. These museums, however, function like textbooks. You go there to study, to learn, to make notes, and if by accident you find yourself in a quiet room on an off day, you might even be able to enjoy looking at a few pictures. The real pleasures of art, however, lie elsewhere: in churches and private collections, in small local museums and public squares where sculptures are pitted by wind, rain, and the poisonous exhaust of millions of automobiles.

One cannot program pleasure or design delight. The more we anticipate a pleasure, the more it eludes our grasp. I have heard many brilliant performances by fine musicians, but I have never enjoyed anything more than a Brahms First played by the Pittsburgh Symphony, because I did not know I was going until 15 minutes before the performance.

I have a drop of sympathy for the sullen young lady who openly declared her contempt for pictures. At least she was not one of those unctuous and false-hearted connoisseurs who drool over paintings like so many *New Yorker* ads. It is better to be an honest vandal, whose greatest pleasure is to smash the Portland Vase or spray-paint the Sistine Chapel with obscenities.

Take no classes in literature or music appreciation, if you can avoid them; attend no lectures and read no interpretive books. Learn to draw or play the piano; write *vers de société*, if you like, if you want to understand technique. Talk to unpretentious friends, but do not, for heaven's sake, try to acquire culture the way you adopt a "lifestyle" or learn accounting. To practice an art seriously requires a commitment as demanding as marriage, but to enjoy poetry or painting is like falling in love. It is stupid; it should not happen, and it cannot be explained, but there you are one day, listening to Mozart or seeing the face of a young girl in church, and you are never the same for it. To plan for such an experience, to induce it artificially and to cultivate it with stimulants betrays a depth of evil and corruption that has only been plumbed in the modern world, where the pursuit of innocence is the apotheosis of vice. c

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Romantic Realism

Visions of Values

by Alexandra York

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

When we recall the great artists of the 19th century, perhaps the vibrant and theatrical images of Delacroix come to mind. Or do scenes of daring and struggle from Hugo flood our memory instead? Or the ebullient audacity of a Schumann song resonate in our ears? Perhaps all three, and more, for theirs was the dramatic, exuberant age of the individual, in life and in art, which was "larger than life."

How different are the images of our own generation. Today, in a culture that glorifies violence, vulgarity, and ugliness—where art has become bereft of any objective standards—we witness a sad scene as most artists flounder to a graceless finish of the 20th century. They are not alone. Intellectuals, public officials, and almost everyone approach *this* millennial birthday warily. Shall there be cause for celebration—or greater trauma?

The hot ashes of 20th-century collectivism and nihilism still spit and sputter around us, but ashes they are. The 1990's signal not only the end of a turbulent century, but also the swift death of communism as a social system and the drawn-out demise of the serious modernist art movement, both of which dominated the period. The future? Some dare to hope, for we are beginning to witness a resurgence of certain hallmarks of the 19th century: a concern for individual freedom in society and a romantic spirit in the arts.

Renewed appropriately, these values could lead us out of our present morass and beyond, to a veritable renaissance. We hear the word "renaissance" tossed about carelessly these days simply because we approach the turn of a century, but in fact the concept holds true currency. Glimmering here and there beneath the debris of 20th-century collapse, sparks of individualism and humanism wait only for a breath of air to flame and fuse them once more into a phoenix that may rise to lead us into the 21st century. If this is to be so, then beauty must be its wings. A restoration of beauty and life-affirming values in art alone cannot forge the path to a full cultural renaissance—only philosophy can do that—but art that makes manifest these values can inspire us by embodying our ideals in concrete form. Indeed, art may be the one dynamic powerful enough to *envision* the way to a better future.

A renaissance, however, is not a "revival." The word means "rebirth." We cannot and should not seek to repeat the past. No matter how groundbreaking was ancient Greece nor how brilliant the Italian Renaissance nor how progressive the Enlightenment, we must begin here and now. We must prepare the intellectual soil—in our own land, in our own context—to produce our own unique flowering of the values that made those great periods of history so significant for all time. This means that, in art, a fresh understanding of romanticism must be advanced and new implications reflecting contemporary sensibilities sought. As "modernism" contrived to put a modern face on primitivism and mysticism, so must romanticism now refresh images of reason and provide an affirmative view of human life on earth.

We do not plant our seeds in an Enchanted Garden. Like it or not, the present environment is what it is. Art has become a commodity cannibalizing itself daily in order to survive without any fresh source of ideological sustenance. Allegiance to human values, to discipline of technical skills, and to a love of beauty would appear to be the radical art ideas of our time. Contemporary artists of the Romantic Realism persuasion *are* the new "radicals," for they embrace these very premises and express them—each individually—in their work. Philosophically, they view the world as a positive and beautiful place and man as capable of living in it. Psychologically, they believe reason and emotion can be harmonized with each other. Artistically, they unify form and content in the same way—and for the same reasons—that they unite reason and emotion. Through examining these premises as expressed in the work of Romantic Realist artists, we may attempt to point the way to definition and understanding.

In a broad swath, we may say that the best contemporary Romantic Realists weave into their work the greatest beauty of nature and the highest thoughts of man; beauty enhances truth, and truth strengthens beauty—weft and warp are tightly entwined. To disassemble this intricate tapestry for the purpose of understanding its construction takes patience. And to further unravel the tangled mess of the present art world in which Romantic Realists find themselves takes nothing less than fortitude.

Let us begin with the term *Romantic Realism*. Realism in art may be divided into a wide variety of subcategories: "Clas-

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sical" Realism, "Photo" Realism, "Political" Realism, "Social" Realism, the straightforward mimesis of "Realist" Realism, plus a hundred more modifiers. Simply put, all forms of realism in the visual arts present recognizable images of objective reality, meaning the physical world, including mankind.

The "realisms" important to our present examination are "Classical" Realism and "Realist" Realism, for to some degree both are employed by the "Romantic" Realist. Artists of both schools produce representational work that relies upon established Western techniques of painting and sculpture for the physical execution of their art. "Classical" Realist artists work within the canons of form derived from Greco-Roman art in order to create the *ideal* through generalization (we are reminded that it was precisely the formulization of Classicism against which the 19th-century European Romantics rebelled). "Realist" Realist artists use the same technical skills in order to represent *real* life through particularization. We might say that although technically similar, the main difference between Classicists and Realists is that the first seek perfection and the second accuracy; the first project universality and the second specificity.

But the "Romantic" seeks, above all else, expression. Individuality as expressed through the subjective emotions of the artist was—and is—the leitmotiv of the Romantic spirit. Romanticism has undergone a variety of interpretations. Even such a quintessential romantic as Delacroix, when hailed as the "Victor Hugo of painting," could retort, "Sir, I am a pure classicist!" Nevertheless, one attribute of Romanticism is unchanging: a romantic (whether in art or in life) is one who loves emotions. And emotions are highly individual stirrings indeed.

Today, we know much more about emotions than did our 19th-century counterparts. We understand that emotions flow directly from value stimulation. Whether values are rational or irrational is, here, beside the point; in art we are concerned with their visual manifestation. On value expression in art, the philosopher and novelist Ayn Rand, in her 1969 *Romantic Manifesto*, defines art as "a selective re-creation of reality according to an artist's metaphysical value-judgments." On emotions, she elsewhere states: "Just as the pleasure-pain mechanism of man's body is an automatic indicator of his body's welfare or injury . . . so the emotional mechanism of man's consciousness is geared to perform the same function . . . by means of two basic emotions: joy or suffering. Emotions are the automatic results of man's value judgments integrated by his subconscious. . ."

Needless to say, emotional *conflicts* are the power-packed stuff of which good fiction is made. This is precisely because—as value responses—emotional conflicts are highly charged dramatizations of *value* conflicts. Romantic Realist painters and sculptors, however, tend to project harmony between reason and emotions. Whether in conflict or harmony, reason and emotions are human attributes, so art that explores these attributes must by definition be anthropocentric; hence, it must be representational and executed through the same technical skills employed by Classical and Realist Realists.

Treatment—and importance—of subject matter can be quite a different matter. Many 20th-century Classical Realists have buried their heads in the sands of time, merely creating over and over again subjects from antiquity through the 19th century. Some Realist Realists, bitten by the modernist bug, treat subject only as form in order to address aesthetics exclusively, in which case subject matter does not matter at all; the work can be as dehumanized as any abstract work.

Subject alone, however, does not make a work of art romantic; images of girls in white dresses, porch swings, and pets are but sentimental attempts at Romanticism. For the mature Romantic artist, subject matter "matters" because it is selected primarily for its ability to best express the content of a work. "Content" is the pulsing inner life—the deeper theme—of a work of art; it is the sum of the *ideas* held, consciously or unconsciously, by the artist that is revealed by his choices of form, medium, and subject right on down to every brush stroke or chisel mark. Content and content alone causes a work of art to transcend its obvious subject matter and communicate, indirectly, the most intimate values of the artist. And it is content, transformed by the artist into a silent melody of visual aesthetics, that echoes through our senses to find an answering "Amen" in the private recesses of our souls when we respond profoundly to a work of art.

But it is, above all, the artist's *feelings* for the ideas he holds about life and humankind—and about himself—that turn him from a realist into a "romantic" who needs to suffuse his work with the emotional aura of his values. Like his 19th-century forebears, today's Romantic uses form (the physical presentation) to communicate content (human values) through individual style (emotional expression), thereby making the means and the end merge, blend, and reemerge as one totality of experience that unifies mind, body, and soul. The whole, then, is much greater than the sum of its parts. Herein lies art's ability to afford us a spiritual experience as well as an aesthetic one. The spiritual in art is not evoked by an *escape* from reality but by an *embrace* of it—existence and consciousness unified and experienced as one. Remember that one of the root meanings of the word "holy" is *whole*, as in "complete."

With such potent similarities as these, we may wonder if any significant difference arises between the separated-by-a-century Romantic brethren. It does. It is this difference, in fact, that makes the 20th-century counterpart a Romantic *Realist*. Rather than fixing a focus on history, mythology, the remote, or the exotic, the contemporary Romantic expresses his views through images of the present, of the here and now—the real. Yet, once again like his kin, subject matter is handled with the touch of a poet. Images are imbued with beauty and created with tender ferocity or fierce tenderness; it does not matter which because it is the artist's temperament, alone, that determines his style of communication.

Art, however, should be more than just an artist's temperament revealed. There are those who claim that Abstract Expressionists are the offspring of the 19th-century Romantics, engaging in expression for the sake of expression. But, upon reflection, the Romantic Realists are their rightful heirs. Simply to follow the linear path of individual *expression* begun by the Romantics to *abstraction* is to arrive at the dead end of subjectivity, which is unintelligibility at worst or decorative art at best. The theater of emotional expression can become the street brawl of emotional explosion if it is not channeled through the discipline of a form versatile enough to act as a strong but plastic conduit.

Another reason form must be malleable is that ideas change as knowledge and development expand; artists, therefore, must have the continuing ability to adapt form to fresh pur-

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pose in order for it to both absorb new ideas and communicate eternal verities in contemporary terms. The strength of realism as a form derives from its integrative power and elasticity, both of which enable it to stretch into an infinite variety of shapes and contain that power surge which is content electrified by temperament. In his 1863 obituary of Delacroix, Baudelaire wrote that the painter was "passionately in love with passion and coldly determined to seek out the means to express passion in the most visible manner." Once again, we are reminded that form must serve content, even if the content is emotion itself.

Perhaps this respect for established Western forms is what kept 19th-century Romantic masters from crossing the line over into the abstract aesthetic. Some talked about it, and others nearly went over the brink, but the great ones never toppled. Perhaps they grasped that abstract art—as beautiful as some of it may be—is a highly limited art form, one within which they could not expand their aesthetic vocabulary any more than they could fill its shallow vessel with a rich content that would tie it to human life, human concerns, and human needs. Within the discipline of architecture, abstraction has ample room to evolve into a complex and noble literature, but in painting and sculpture the abstract aesthetic must by its nature turn inward upon itself and become an examination of its own form. In abstract art, aesthetics is all.

As for self-expression? Demonstrably, it can quickly become self-indulgence or else so personal and esoteric a lingua that it holds little interest for anyone other than the artist. Not a few "artists" in the 20th century have proclaimed a new aesthetic "language" only to obfuscate the fact that they were speaking gibberish. But to expand the breadth of the vocabulary of the 19th-century Romantics—laterally—within the form of *realism* is, for contemporary Romantic Realists, to meet no boundaries at all. The form is inductive rather than reductive, its potential so infinite that limitless expression and limitless ideas can be explored within the aesthetic, pleasing the senses *and* the mind, as well as the heart.

The work of Classical artists engaged in searching for the ideal can become impersonal and codified. That of Realist artists in searching for the "real" can become trivial and literal. That of the best Abstract artists stops at the point where all good representational art begins: with a strong abstract design. Romantic Realists synthesize all these various persuasions so as to combine their strengths while avoiding their weaknesses. Then, unable to resist—for that is what makes them Romantics—Romantic Realists ignite the flame of emotion deep within the interior of their work, and it spreads and glows throughout. If successful, the resulting art offers tantalizing visions of a *heightened* reality, a reality that is universal yet individual, imagined yet real, timeless yet timely. Emotion harnessed by technique, expression evolving from content, and the eternal explored in the temporal. Mood, mystery, and metaphor. Possibilities. Passion. Life.

Romantic Realists do not deny and may even dramatize human struggle, suffering, or absurdity, but if they choose to explore the underbelly of life, the best of them do so with a higher purpose. It takes little imagination to bewail the ills of existence or to stamp one's artistic foot at reality through irony or to retreat into either angst or the endless distraction of novelty; it takes even less imagination to propagandize and promote political agenda through the "media" of art. Artists can address human struggles, to be sure. But rather than resorting to the easy outlets of whine or tantrum, they can express struggle as an act of affirmation, by respecting the power of human sight rather than degrading it and by offering visions of why the struggle is worthwhile so that life might be enhanced and encouraged toward the better.

Self-absorption and fascination with the dark are pastimes of the idle, the alienated, and the angry; artists so preoccupied are serving as the handmaidens of death and destruction. Worse even than the nihilism of much modernist art, the deliberate immersion into the horrific and demonic in which too much contemporary art wallows lacks either aesthetics or purpose—except, perhaps, the purpose of shocking an artist's name into headlines for an illusory moment of fame.

Warnings against artistic descent into decadence have come to us repeatedly throughout the ages. Aristotle: "As for those [works of art] that by means of spectacle arouse not fear but only horror, they have nothing in common with tragedy." Mozart: "Violent passion should never be expressed to the point of provoking disgust. Even in a horrible situation, music should never hurt the ears, nor cease to be music." Goethe: "There is an empty spot in the brain, a place, that is, where no object makes an impression, just as the eye too contains a blind spot. If man pays attention to this place, he becomes absorbed in it; he falls into mental illness; he imagines things of another world, which in fact are pure nothings and have neither forms nor boundaries, but cause fear like that of night's empty space and pursue more cruelly than specters anyone who does not tear himself from their grasp." All of us who love art must heed these warnings. For if we fail to generate a 21st-century renaissance, then surely we shall suffer a Dark Age. The alternative exists, because the legacy lives.

Today's Romantics are less vocal than their 19th-century counterparts, who banded together in camaraderie to become the vanguard; if they are "radicals," then they are radicals for beauty. Today's *genuine* rebels are men and women—painters, sculptors, composers, writers—who work quietly and individually to create meaningful art from the fountainhead of their personal vision. They care not for bombastics against other persuasions. They work confident in the knowledge that beauty illuminating pro-human ideas speaks through their art to anyone who wishes to see the light.

It is a passion for life that leads contemporary Romantic Realists forward to express a rebirth of values that can elevate their own spirit as well as of those who experience their art. It is a reverence and a tenacious love for the beautiful—and for the possible—in the world and in humankind that clears their vision to create images of glory in their art—images that thrill us, that move us, that inspire us. For what cannot be imagined cannot happen.

Artists have always been the dreamers. Whether we follow beautiful dreams or nightmares is up to us. Ugliness and cruelty and tragedy are part of life, to be sure, but the Romantic Realist knows that in *art*, it is life-serving values that we need to see—to experience—in order to bring those visions of values into the real world. The *avant garde* artists of today may again be the romantic, yet unsung, crusaders of the future—each armed not with a sword but with a rose. ◁c

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The sculpture on the cover and the four paintings that follow are examples of Romantic Realism. The analyses are by Alexandra York.

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PRIMARY TULIPS

Joe Anna Arnett, Oil on linen, 26" x 22"

Here is an artist fully engaged in not only the vibrant energy of nature's teleological striving for ripeness but also in the creative impulse of man's conscious purpose as he reshapes nature into objects for his use and pleasure. Aesthetic values and virtuosity of technique can be appreciated on their own, but they also become the means by which Ms. Arnett explores the sensuality of all the senses: texture, taste, sight, and even smell and sound—the last two evoked through fragrant subject matter and complex "musical" rhythms of line, bold brush strokes, and daring composition. She encourages us to wonder at the world and at humankind by focusing our attention on the small wonders *of* the world and *by* humans, bringing forth the beauty of both and "stilling" them for our contemplation.

Nothing is accidental. The title offers us a clue to the painting's meaning. The colors are primary ones—red, yellow, and blue—but this is obvious. The choice of a pottery vase is more subtle. The crafting of pottery is an art in its own right: composed of clay, scooped from the earth and shaped by human hand, then made permanent by fire. In this case, the pottery holds water to prolong the life of the tulips. Water has no shape of its own; it is given (implicit) shape here by the form of the vessel that holds it. Air has no shape of its own; it, too, is perceived as shape in life (negative space) by objects. It is the fundamental "primaries" that we are reminded of—the natural elements of earth, fire, water, and air.

Ms. Arnett grows her own flowers and artfully arranges them (another art, "Ikebana") at the moment of their blossoming, which suits her design. Peaches and grapes stress nature's "natural" bounty, reminding us of the seasons and of the renewal that occurs without the presence of humankind. The wood table stresses the opposite, nature's bounty of trees transformed by man into lumber and crafted into furniture (another art); the artist raises this latter thought to a higher power by commissioning all of her picture frames from carved wood (another art) to complete and complement her images. Finally, the primary of the sun: giving light without which humans cannot see and the life-giving energy without which flowers, fruit, trees, and humans cannot flourish.

UNION

Frederick E. Hart, Bronze, 20"

A double nude is rare in contemporary sculpture. When an artist presents either a male or female nude as a single unit—assuming it is not a journalistic, literal imitation—we are stirred to examine the human condition as it pertains to itself (consciousness) or to reality (existence). This complex issue is a haunting one, and daunting enough. But when another human is introduced into a group artwork, the content becomes even more complicated because we must then address the human condition as it pertains to relationships. When we are presented only with a male and a female alone, we face the most potent relationship of all.

But in *Union*, Frederick Hart does not wish us to "face" that relationship. He makes double certain we do not misinterpret his purpose by facing his subjects *away from each other*. He is interested in projecting a different idea, one that man and woman share not each to the other, but both—as a species—to something else. That something else is Creation, the force of creation, the *idea* of creation. Note the composition. The figures are joined at the back as if springing from the same source.

Note also the aesthetic clues. The patina is golden indicating (perhaps a sacred) light. The anatomy is accurate but slightly elongated to achieve a sense of rising; this same effect is further emphasized by the feet of the figures, which do not touch solid ground. The surface of the bronze is smooth, the modeling only lightly articulated, adding to the sense of unresisting movement and (as yet) unrealized mortal strength. The entire form is like an arrow, pointed in a direction not determined by the figures themselves but by an ultimate destiny not theirs to choose. There is no fear. They move smoothly, peacefully, acceptingly to their fate.

BEACHCOMBER

Anthony Frudakis, Bronze, 21"

This work expresses a subtle homage to the Greek heritage of sculptor Anthony Frudakis, but an homage in a completely contemporary mode. *Beachcomber* evokes the ancient world by the drapery of her dress (a Greek gown) but holds us close to our own time by the style of clothing (a simple summer dress) and its silver washed patina. The female figure is a thoroughly modern one, taking steps that will cross the line between girlhood and womanhood. Note her sense of self-awareness and new femininity as she caresses her long hair with her own fingers, and notice her clearly 20th-century body—with deep bronze patina connoting free, out-of-doors, sun-kissed health. The linear passages of the work are full of fluid movement, reinforcing our impression of the calm rhythm of the beachcomber's walk.

The figure's bare feet urge us to think of the ocean, a timeless and eternal attraction; she holds her sandals in her hand, and we are moved to consider her relationship to the sea. Could this enchanting creature be a modern Aphrodite, mythical symbol of feminine beauty and love? The homage to ancient Greece gathers even deeper meaning; it becomes an homage to the entire Olympian family of gods and goddesses shaped in the image of humankind. It becomes an homage to all women, especially at that magic moment when they step through the rite of passage that opens the way to their own blooming. Woman, stepping from the past to the future, setting her footprints upon the sands of time. Ancient and modern themes of beauty, promise, and love are joined in this one *Beachcomber*.

BALD HEAD, MAINE

Frank Mason, Oil on canvas, 48" x 60"

Frank Mason does not have time to care if we skim over the depth of his painting's content, although he would be overjoyed if we experience any or all of it. He delivers the whole experience at once; the parts are so flowingly integrated and our spirit is captured so quickly that we, at first, resist contemplation. No title. A place. Does it really matter where? Raw, ragged, raging nature. A surging sea crashes upon rocks of stone in a crescendo of sounds that find their reverberating echo in the vibrant colors of a turbulent sky. In case we forgot or became blasé—or thought we tamed it all—our complacency is slapped into fresh sensibility by the cold, stinging spray, and we are brought again to awe by the grandeur of it all. We may even sense the solid earth beneath our feet move slightly from remembrance, now, of hidden powers churning in the center of our planet, which rise and dance to orchestrations of the wind and moon.

Mason's "Old Master" techniques and passionate brush strokes, sweeping lines, swirling forms, and harmonious melody of colors make us *see* the *sea* anew. And the sky. "Bald Head" is bald nature unleashed. Plain and straight. No metaphors here.

But there *is* a sign of man. Notice the boat, its sail barely visible above the foam. Does the sailor have a chosen destination, or is he lost and challenging nature to keep the boat aright? Both possibilities are man's condition. Little by little we are drawn from the surface excitement of the senses and the sublime spectacle of the physical world deeper and quieter into human thought. Like a scuba diver who descends from the roaring and whipping surface to the silent and still depths of the ocean, we enter inner realms of realization. Nature and humanity. Existence and consciousness. Eternal and temporal.

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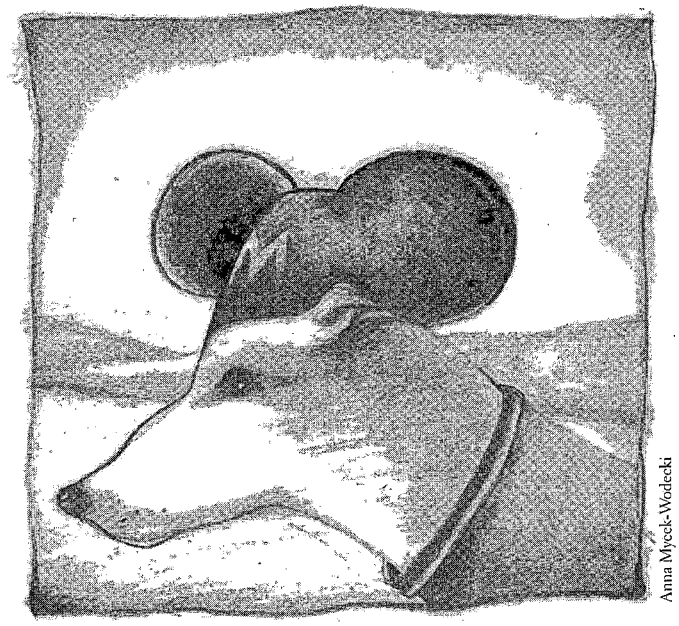
The Danger of PICS—Politically Incorrect Cartoons

by Mary Elizabeth Podles and Leon J. Podles



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Stereotypes to the right of them, stereotypes to the left of them, the politically correct volley and thunder at every image that might offend the sensitive soul of the approved victim. Dartmouth's comic Indian mascot turned into an unsmiling noble savage, then was abolished altogether. First the Frito Bandito's politically unacceptable gold tooth disappeared, then it was noticed that he himself wasn't particularly p.c. either, and he vanished into the sunset. Aunt Jemima lost her culinarily reassuring but racist (and weightist) avoirdupois and transmuted into a jazzy Diana Ross lookalike. Yet a fountainhead of politically incorrect imagery remains free to corrupt the souls of America's youth: the animated cartoon, especially as practiced by the long shadow of that dead Euro-American white male, Walt Disney.

Disney is full of attacks upon the sensibilities of the politically correct. Scrooge McDuck has done untold harm to the Scots among us, who are full of generous impulses yet find few role models of a careless liberality with money. *Lady and the Tramp* is shockingly p.i. with its Chihuahua much worse than the above-mentioned Bandito and with its pair of Siamese cats, who do nothing to promote positive attitudes toward Asians. Even Lady has been denounced as a paradigm of 1950's containment, who trades her sexual liberty for a marriage license and a leash. And the crows on the fence in *Dumbo* simply pass beyond the pale.

Most recently, *Beauty and the Beast* perpetrates the most harmful of sex-role caricatures. While Belle is an acceptable mix of Madame Bovary and a bluestocking, the men in her life are a non-nurturing chauvinist lot: an absentminded professor, a macho jock, his Best Buddy, and the Beast, who is, of course, a beast. Speciesism, too, raises its ugly head: the wolves, whom we know now to be gentle and kindly mammals, are shown attacking human beings. There has been much inappropriate laughter in movie theaters. In the groves of academe, where such things are properly understood, the mirthful would no doubt be packed off to reorientation seminars.

You may have noticed that we are getting a little carried away. But what the attackers of stereotyping miss, and what this application of their method to Disney demonstrates by a *reductio ad absurdum*, is that cartoons and their verbal equivalents are funny because they depend on caricature, on exaggerating slight characteristics into prominent and universal ones. Caricature is nothing new, nor is it purely the domain of the ephemeral or of low art. Giulio Romano's Mannerist masterwork, the *Sala dei Giganti* (Palazzo del Te, Mantua) is a lofty foreshadowing of Disney's best in its exaggerated postures, its parodies of Michelangelo, its grotesque expressions of horror, its movie-screen scale, and its witty blend of spatial special effects, mixed media, and lighting from natural and artificial sources. Giulio's scene of the ruin of the giants is a tour de force, partly horrific, partly grotesque and funny, and entirely appropriate to the playful character of a festival palazzo: caricature and entertainment, but undeniable art.

Nor need the animated film feature be dismissed as inconsequential or nonart. Many have begun to suspect as much: *Beauty and the Beast* is the first cartoon to be nominated for Best Picture. Disney has always evinced a taste for cartoons based on stories with a tragic or pathetic element. *Bambi*, which has become a byword for unendurable and saccharine cuteness, conveys a strong dose of the original tale, which grew out of the mass slaughter of the First World War. The

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German Expressionists (*Bambi* is an expressionist novel) plumbed the depths of sadness and suffering in both the animal and human world. "All being is suffering" is the motto borne by Franz Marc's painting of the death of animals. What strong heart among us remains unmoved by the death of Bambi's mother?

Sadness, too, is a strong element in the fairy tale, or more properly the folktale, and Disney often increases the sadness by tightening up the story lines and giving them a definite timeframe. For instance, in *Beauty and the Beast* the prince has a time-limit on his redemption: he must make someone love him before the last petal falls from a rose.

Much of the power of Disney's *Beauty and the Beast* may derive from its primary source of cinematic influence, Jean Cocteau's 1946 *La Belle et la bête*. First, Disney borrows some of its best visual effects from Cocteau, in fact some of his most famous theatrical and cinematic inventions. The overall dark tone of Disney's version and its phantasmagorical architecture is also reminiscent of Cocteau, who shot most of his exteriors among the bizarre animal sculptures of the chateau at Raray. Disney's talking objects, the clock and the candlestick, the teapot, cup, wardrobe, and all the rest, also find their source in *La Belle et la bête*. In Cocteau's film, the invisible hands described in the original fairy tale become terribly visible, but disembodied. Real arms sprout from walls and tables to hold candelabra or pour drinks; caryatids whose eyes follow La Bête's measured courtship breathe out smoke at appropriate moments; La Belle's bed unmakes itself to receive her, and most important for Disney, her mirror and the door of her room explain themselves to her in disembodied voices. The helpful, magical talking object is of course a staple or a stock character in the folktale as Robert Darnton explains in *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, a French story in which the Devil's daughter and her lover make a daring escape by the clever ruse of leaving two talking pâtés in their beds to make their excuses. Perhaps they are the ancestors of Disney's Food Folies-Bergère.

As for the story line itself, the Disney version also borrows heavily from Cocteau. Cocteau transformed Madame Leprince de Beaumont's original story considerably: hers was the familiar, pleasant, moralizing tale of outward ugliness and inner beauty, demonstrating the importance of looking beyond externals to the beauty of the spirit. Behind it, however, lurks the original folktale of the animal bridegroom, an archetype that deals with woman's revulsion from the male and her reconciliation with him. In these stories, the beast-bridegroom, a caricature of the male, shocks and horrifies his bride with his violence, his aggression, his hairiness, even while attracting her. She tames and gentles him and comes to love him, taking a certain pleasure in his force. It is so, as Bruno Bettelheim maintains, that the types of the folktale prepare its hearers for the real events of their lives.

Cocteau as a surrealist returns to this mythic dimension of the story, to explore and make real images of the unconscious and the deep and mysterious currents of human existence. Cocteau is the first to split up the good and bad qualities of the male and female archetypes between, on the one hand, La Belle's family and friends, representing the mundane and reprehensible, and on the other, La Belle herself and her Bête, the embodiments of essential man and woman in relationship. The two sisters are vain and frivolous, silly, mean, all the stereotypes we dislike in women, while La Belle is their opposing counterpart, modest, serious, gentle, loyal, loving, compassionate, in short, beautiful. Similarly, Cocteau divides the male persona between the ineffectual father, the rascally but attractive up-and-comer Avenant, the brother Ludovic in the role of Best Buddy, and naturally La Bête. Cocteau's characters are not fully realized, nor are they meant to be. They are recognizable stock characters, who fall somewhere on the continuum between archetype and caricature, quite appropriate to the fairy tale. Because his characters are stock types, Cocteau can even get away with the stereotyped Jewish moneylender, rather an audacious stroke in the France of 1946. Yet no one takes offense: the immediately recognizable type simply symbolizes the predicament into which La Belle's father has fallen.

Because he uses the stock types of the fairy tale as his main characters, Cocteau can more safely investigate the archetypal relationship between man and woman, that is, between her beauty and his beastliness. For Cocteau's La Bête is indeed a beast. Unlike Leprince de Beaumont's gentle monster, Cocteau's La Bête pricks up his ears at the whiff of passing game, leaves mangled animals on the grass, comes in bloody from the kill with his hands smoking, and, while resplendent in Christian Bérard's silk and velvets, is wondrously furred and fanged, inarticulate, full of depths of violence and aggression. Still, aware of his own beastliness, he is unnerved by La Belle and cannot bear to look her in the eyes. In turn she looks at him first with fear and loathing, then takes pity on him, letting him drink from her cupped hands rather than lap water from a pool like an animal. From pity springs compassion, and from that, affection and an eventual admission of love.

Here then is the ancestor of the central premise of the Disney version. Disney's Beast is not particularly pleasant at the beginning: he and the village suitor share the most obnoxious character traits of the male. While Gaston is simply a macho pig who can think of nothing but hunting, fighting, and himself, Beast is initially even worse. He embodies, and so in a sense caricatures, the violence of the male. He terrifies everyone who encounters him by his appearance (half buffalo, half lion) and temper. It is his violence that repels Belle, yet it saves her life. Beast rescues Belle when she flees his castle and is attacked by wolves, but only at the cost of the rending of his own body. She nurses him back to health and slowly gentles him. The movie is full of sentimental, but very true, songs about the "tale as old as time," the transforming powers of love on the rough male character.

Beast, respecting her intellect, gives Beauty access to his library, which is on the scale of the Bibliothèque Nationale, and falls in love with her. He lets her go to rescue her father, although he knows that time has run out and that he will stay a beast forever. The villagers attack him, led by Gaston, in a scene taken from the attacks on Frankenstein's and Dracula's castles. Gaston attacks the despairing Beast, who does not fight back, until he sees that Belle has returned. He vanquishes Gaston, but Gaston stabs him in the back. Gaston falls to his death, but Beast dies, too.

Cocteau's scene of the death of La Bête played further on his division of the male persona into Avenant and La Bête. At the end, Avenant, who would take La Bête's treasure and magic by force, is shot and transformed by magical powers into a monster like La Bête, while La Bête, redeemed by La Belle's admission of love, transmutes into the Prince, played by Jean Marais, who also played Avenant. While admitting her

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affection for the now departed Avenant (she never admitted it to him), La Belle is a little disturbed by the Prince's resemblance to Avenant—actually, by this time she preferred him as La Bête (and so do we).

Disney's ending is less ambivalent, attempting something that suggests the people at Disney have studied literary criticism. J. R. R. Tolkien in "On Fairy-Stories" defines the opposite of the catastrophe, the *eucatastrophe*, the sudden and unexpected good, so unlooked for that it takes the breath away and gives a glimpse of *evangelion*, the good news beyond hope and even beyond imagination. For Tolkien this is the heart of the fairy tale. As Beast dies and the rose loses its last petal, Belle tells him that she loves him. The rain and her tears mingle. But then the rain begins to turn iridescent, and the body of Beast is lifted off the ground by a power that suspends it in midair. Light streams from inside the body, and Beast is transformed from within. He returns from death and is now the Prince, who weds Beauty. The castle, which is mostly covered with nightmare figures and gargoyles, is washed by the rain and light into a Rococo chateau, and the demons into cherubs. The movie strikes deep chords here: Redemption and Transformation through a sacrificial Love-Death.

Disney Studios has always had a taste for capturing the essence of a place. *Peter Pan* is filled with scenes of J. M. Barrie's London (now lost forever to the Blitz and development). *Beauty and the Beast* is a study in the French chateau: Disney's dark castle is a composite of many in France, embellished and amplified, to the delight of the architectural historian who recognizes snippets of Chenonceaux and Chambord, bits of Versailles, and a little of the Orangerie thrown together and multiplied. The beast's chateau in its monstrous state recalls the incrustations of French Gothic, where the gargoyles stand for the distortion and deformity implicit in the disordered state of evil.

When the cleansing rain of tears comes, the dark chateau is transformed into an evocation of the playful, erotic beauty of the Classical and Rococo pleasure palace. It is the architecture proper to the fairy-tale ending, the Never-Never Land of magical eroticism and romance implied by "happily ever after." Is this a caricature? a cliché? a fondly recognized truism? Is it art? or a theatrical parody of art?

More than architecture is being parodied here. The Gothic horror of the earlier chateau recalls the caricature-stereotype of the horror movie set as much as any genuine monument. The rousing of the villagers mentioned above is a direct descendant of the Frankenstein genre. The ballroom scene recalls many a romantic black-and-white (probably now colorized) costume piece from the 1940's. Beauty and the Beast exchange snappy banter like a cartoon Hepburn and Tracy, and the two burst into song in the conventional pattern of the musical comedy, or, more exactly, the Viennese light opera. Disney uses theatrical and cinematic stereotypes-*cum*-clichés as a form of gentle caricature, fondly acknowledging his sources, just as Cocteau did with the fairy-tale types, to abstract and explore truths about males and females in relationships.

If Disney's sex-role stereotyping flirts with censure in the present political climate (though Beauty has yet to be tarred with the same brush as poor Lady), its political tendencies as revealed in animated cinema should be a logical target for p.c. wrath. *Fantasia* is a case in point. Disney's *Fantasia* was released on videocassette in 1991, but the doyens of political correctness have not yet pounced upon the ultimate sin: cinematic fascism. We most recently saw the movie during the Persian Gulf War, in a restored 1930's movie palace. The manager, after asking ladies to remove their hats, said that the screening would be preceded by a newsreel from 1940, the events of which had chilling resemblance to the events of our own day. He said that just as the audience of 1940 escaped from the news of the day into the new type of entertainment that *Fantasia* represented, we could for a while escape our own problems.

The Movietone newsreel, narrated by Lowell Thomas, contained a summary of the events of 1940. It was not a happy year: the evacuation from Dunkirk, the shelling of the French fleet in North Africa by the British, the bombing of Chungking by the Japanese, Roosevelt's attempts to rally the democracies against Hitler, Chamberlain's fall and funeral and Churchill's accession, the bombing of London and Coventry, the preparations for mass conscription in the United States. These events were more than sufficient cause for anxiety.

But when *Fantasia* immediately followed, it became clear that the Disney film was not simply an escape from the terrors of life. The title was aptly chosen: fantasy, dreams, and myth are a means to transform our anxieties and to somehow enable the mind to deal with them or at least bear them. When imagination transforms our anxieties, it gives at least the illusion that we somehow control them.

It was clear from the start that Disney accepted the *Führerprinzip*. The Nazi version of the Great Man theory had its roots in the Romantic conception of the artist as titanic creator. In the 18th century the first violinist was the conductor; his job was to make sure everyone played on key and started and stopped at the same time. By contrast the Romantic conductor was a Great Man, a creator, who ruled massive movements of sound by his genius and force of will. Modris Eksteins, in his book *Rites of Spring: The Great War and the Birth of the Modern Age*, examines how the aestheticization of politics transposed this concept into the image of the political leader. In *Fantasia*, the ten-times-life-size image of the conductor Leopold Stokowski is like the gigantic statues of the ancient world or their successors in both democratic and totalitarian societies of the 1940's. In the newsreel, Roosevelt and Churchill were shown orchestrating opposition to fascism, providing leadership to the masses, just as Stokowski brings order out of chaos by imposing his will in leading the Philadelphia Orchestra. The brief jam session of symphonic jazz that the musicians engage in during one of *Fantasia's* entr'actes is play, not the serious business of music.

Disney pursues the theme throughout *Fantasia*. Mickey Mouse (the Common Man or Everymouse) takes the role of the conductor in the "Sorcerer's Apprentice" sequence and finds it too much for him. One broom is too much for him to control, and the massed army of splinter-grown brooms (this is 1940) frighteningly engulfs him. He cannot impose his will in the least. He is powerless. Not so the Sorcerer, the Great Man. A single gesture of his hands, like Stokowski's, brings the orchestrated broom-terror to a halt. Most menacing of all, in the final sequence, the Devil in the *Night on Bald Mountain* also conducts a fiendish symphony of torment. The conductor's gestures, impotent with Mickey Mouse, creative with Stokowski, powerful with the Sorcerer, become terrifying as

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they work mass violence and destruction.

Even in the abstract sequence at the beginning, in which Bach's *Toccata* and *Fugue in D Minor* (by coincidence *der Führer* means the fugue theme) play, images of mass movements that threaten and overwhelm take shape as visual equivalents to the music. These movements continue in the Dinosaur sequence set to *Le sacre du printemps*, which depicts battle and mass destruction, both in inanimate and animate nature. *Le sacre du printemps* had gone in one generation from being a public scandal to serving as a cartoon accompaniment. But Disney chose the music well, for the prophecy of death and re-creation in the music had been lived out in the Great War and was continuing in the Great War, Part II. The threats of mass movements and mass death in Europe lurk disquietingly below the surface of the images of mass extinction among the dinosaurs. The columns of dinosaurs in the death march are eerily reminiscent of the columns of Belgian refugees in the Movietone newsreel.

In almost all of his movies, Disney is fascinated by loss and death (this extends from the death of Bambi's mother to small-scale images of bursting bubbles and of leaves spiraling away in the wind); still he structures *Fantasia* as a tragicomedy. The thunderstorm sequence to Beethoven's *Pastoral Symphony* presents us with danger under the control of semibenevolent deities with a comic bent. The comedy modulates into farce in the inspired silliness of the *Dance of the Hours*. Classical ballet, realm of the impresario and mass choral movement, bears a certain resemblance in a very nonthreatening way to totalitarian movements. To replace the dancers with gawky ostriches, overweight hippos, and dashing alligators was a stroke of genius. The film concludes by setting the classic symbols of Good and Evil against each other in the juxtaposition of *Night on Bald Mountain* and Schubert's *Ave Maria*.

But is Mickey Mouse a fascist? Does *Fantasia* support or undermine the *Führerprinzip*? Does it belong with *Triumph of the Will*, or with the *Ducktators*? What is the relationship of art, particularly art that caricatures or stereotypes, to the thing that it in some way represents? The recent report to the AAUW from the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women raises objections to school textbooks' stereotyping of women and girls, apparently both as a contributing factor to women's low levels of self-confidence and as a gloss-over of the real problems facing women. But the objections seem to be not that women are stereotyped as such-and-such, but that they are stereotyped at all. By "stereotypes" the report seems to mean "generalizations," and even as such, something forbidden (or as the new verbal code would have it, "inappropriate").

Is all generalization, then, politically incorrect? Surely of all forms of generalization, caricature is the most precarious, the most prone to be used for immoral purposes, for dehumanization of the caricatured victim. Effective caricature is amusing because it shares the incongruity of all humor. The incongruity consists in abstracting a few typical or stereotypical features from a concrete person or group of persons. The isolation and exaggeration of those features becomes the focus, indeed the locus of the humor. It points up folly; it reveals unfortunate truth. It is a form of play, but therefore necessarily a form of struggle, a wrestling with reality that occasionally ends in a pratfall. Is play forbidden? No wonder *Punch* is dead. Lest we take ourselves too seriously, caricature of the self recommends itself to us all—we should be well supplied with humor.

But what about caricature of others? Here the relationship of art to life is more complex and depends on intent, which necessarily factors an element of morality into the equation. The same caricature can be blameless or quite the opposite, depending on how it is used. Take the case of another film, a cartoon of a sort, though not an animated one: Jacques Feyder's wonderful 1935 farce *La Kermesse héroïque*. The story is set in 17th-century Flanders under the Regents; the officials of a small village are terror-stricken at the prospect of the Spanish commander-in-chief's overnight billeting in their town as he passes through with his army. The mayor, and in fact all the men of the town, go into hiding. Pretending to be recently deceased, the mayor chalks his face and lays himself out in state, while his councilmen keep solemn vigil. Meanwhile, outraged by their husbands' cowardliness, the townswomen march out to greet the visiting duke and make accommodations for the temporary occupation. Some prove very accommodating indeed.

Art generalizes. The artist aims at recognition, at the moment when the viewer says "Aha" and understands what the artist is representing. To do so, he must generalize. Generalizations, stock types, folk and fairy-tale heroes and heroines, stereotypes, caricatures, beauties and beasts are but markers on a continuum. If we ban generalization on the grounds that it may be used immorally, we ban all art. Art necessarily abstracts something from reality.

The resulting situation is delicious: stereotypes are turned on their heads; the women take the men's traditional roles while the men take the women's. The occupying army is alternately sentimental, effete, rowdy, and ultimately benevolent. Through it all the characters slip in and out of *tableaux vivants* of famous Dutch and Flemish paintings: the indignant town council mutters together around a carpeted table in the poses of Rembrandt's *Syndics of the Draper's Guild*; their wives, equally indignant, forge their countermove posed as Hals' *Regentesses*. The mayor, spying out his wife's suspected infidelity, parodies the imposing central figure of the *Night Watch*. His wife, fresh from the Duke's embraces, stands in the attitude and dress of one of Vermeer's models of domestic virtue. Not only does the film continue the venerable Flemish literary and artistic tradition of the world turned upside-down, it turns the great art of the Low Countries topsy-turvy to add to the fun.

The film's fate in later years, however, strikes a chilling note. In the occupied France of 1941, Feyder's film was wide-

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ly promoted by the Germans as an illustration of the advantages and benefits of a happy collaboration between the occupied and the "civilized" occupying army. Suddenly the playfulness turns deadly earnest. Here, then, is the danger of caricature: like any art, it can be put to evil use. Political philosophers, from Plato onwards, have assumed a simple correspondence between viewing art and a life formed by the viewing of art. The poets told fables of the gods' immorality; they must therefore be banished from the city, lest they corrupt morals. Such a simple correspondence is indeed possible. Stylization and caricature, even the merest generalization, can lead to dehumanization.

That is the danger of art. Art generalizes. The artist aims at recognition, at the moment when the viewer says "Aha" and understands what the artist is representing. To do so, he must generalize. Generalizations, stock types, folk and fairy-tale heroes and heroines, stereotypes, caricatures, beauties and beasts are but markers on a continuum. If we ban generalization on the grounds that it may be used immorally, we ban all art. Art necessarily abstracts something from reality. It is therefore, as Plato said, less than reality, a copy of a reality, which is itself a copy, a flickering of shadows on the wall. But the Neoplatonists would counter that art captures something of the archetype that may not be clearly visible in the reality itself.

This is not to say that art and morality are divorced from each other. Art, even great art, can be used for immoral purposes, can be a *fleur du mal* that should be restricted or suppressed. However, the solution to the misuse of good art by evil intent, whether high art or caricature, is not to banish it, but rather to school the viewer in a doctrine of moral law and philosophy in which art has its place. Both the Beautiful and the Good are necessary to the life of society. That way the caricatures that are crude, vicious, and intended to inspire hatred are dismissed with disgust or scornful laughter, like the graffiti on rest room walls.

And here is our quarrel with the enforcers of the politically correct in art, who have once again banned Huck Finn and Nigger Jim from the schoolroom. Because of the political hatefulness of the "n" word, schoolchildren are to be robbed of the acquaintance of two of the most sympathetic characters in all of American literature. Politics, the willful grasping of power, is the ultimate measure of art in the minds of these deconstructors.

Locke believed the antidote to the misuse of liberty is more liberty. The best antidote to the misuse of art, high or low, is more art, so that the aberrations are lost in a sea of valid and compelling explorations of reality.

Loveliest of Trees

by John Senior

Another Winter on my head,
I gaze out at the storm with dread,
watching as the snowflakes fill
the dish upon my windowsill,
like the birds who search for crumbs,
scared of everything that comes.

The young behind me at the fire,
have come to honor and admire,
as if by these they would get some
of what they think is my wisdom,
praising me as if it meant
endurance were accomplishment.

How could they understand the fear
that, take or leave a crumb or year,
there won't be more than four or five,
that they are keeping me alive,
as freezing age, wind, ice and snow
break the brittle cherry bough.

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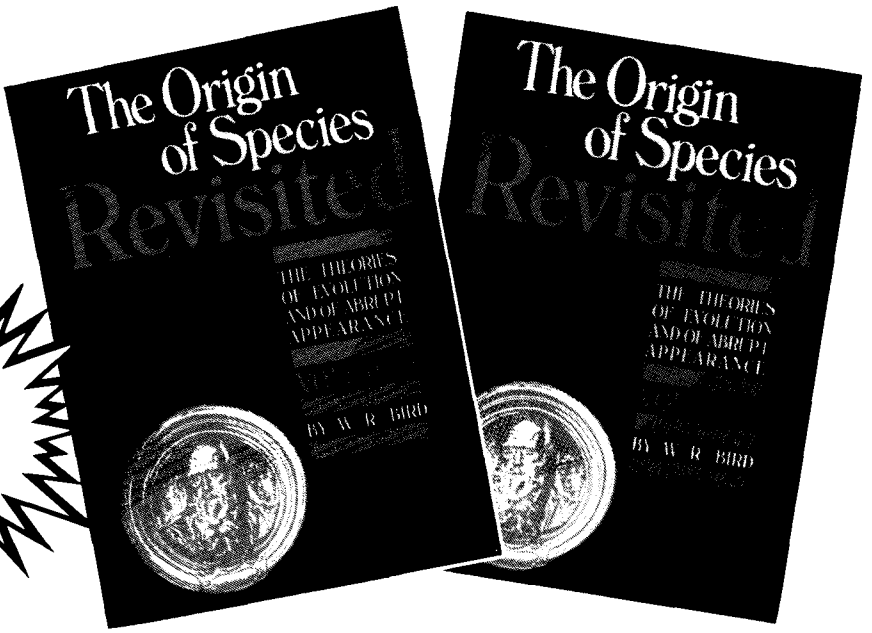
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THE THEORIES OF EVOLUTION AND OF ABRUPT APPEARANCE
BY W. R. BIRD
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Versailles-on-Hudson

by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

"Our high respect for a well-read man is praise enough of literature."
—R.W. Emerson

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

My Silk Purse and Yours: The Publishing Scene and American Literary Art
by George Garrett
Columbia: University of Missouri Press; 316 pp., $29.95

The Sorrows of Fat City: A Selection of Literary Essays and Reviews
by George P. Garrett
Columbia: University of South Carolina Press; 343 pp., $34.95

◆

A critic who tries to stay abreast of the literature of his time, in any time, deserves respect as well as sympathy from less heroic readers content to pick and choose from among the deluge of titles that sends one literary year after the next spinning away down the ceaseless cascading indiscriminate flood. "I read all the time, then," George Garrett says of himself as a boy,

> and I still do. And after I became a teacher and then later a certified (by finally being published) writer, I did not put away childish things, but just added to them. I have for thirty-some years judged countless contests and grant applications and prizes. And I have edited poetry and fiction, too, for various magazines and presses. And I have reviewed books all the time, individually and in clusters for chronicle reviews and in mountainous caches, over the last few years, for the annual "Year in Fiction" essay for the *Dictionary of Literary Biography Yearbook* where in ten or twelve thousand words I try to do my best to report on a calendar year's worth of American fiction. At this time I am still doing at least some of all of it, and I think it would be perfectly safe to say that I read more fiction, at all stages of its development, than anybody else in this country. . . . And I am not a bona fide speed reader, either ["The Star System," *My Silk Purse and Yours*].

In these two volumes alone, which must account for a small fraction of his critical production, Professor Garrett assesses at length the merits and demerits of work by Norman Podhoretz, B. S. Johnson, Fred Chappell, Mary Johnston, Shelby Foote, James Jones, Reynolds Price, Madison Smartt Bell, Bobbie Ann Mason, John Barth, Hillary Masters, Paul Fussell, David Slavitt, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Joyce Cary, James Gould Cozzens, John Ciardi, Robert Penn Warren, John Cheever, Saul Bellow, Wright Morris, and William Faulkner, as well as by many other writers in "short takes"—and considers also such vasty topics as the star system in contemporary American letters, the publishing business and its effect on American literary art in the late 20th century, and the state of Southern literature in the present day. Does the man never have any fun at all?

Yes he does, and an astonishing amount of it he seems to take from reading books. My almost sole reservation

Chilton Williamson, Jr. is senior editor for books at Chronicles.

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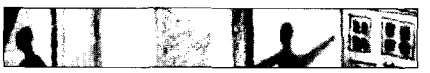
regarding Garrett's criticism, in fact, is that it too often gives the impression that the author has never met a book—a novel especially—he didn't like. Where Professor Garrett (in my opinion) errs, he is led astray chiefly by mellow over-generosity: George Garrett emphatically is not the John Simon of contemporary literary critics. The phrase "one of our very best writers" comes too trippingly at his call, while his assessment of Bobbie Ann Mason (for instance) as "an artist who is beginning to show a potential for major accomplishment" is ludicrous. (A single sentence quoted by Garrett from Mason's "Private Lies"—"Now they were called hairdressers, or better still, cosmetologists, which sounded like a group Carl Sagan would be president of"—tells you all you need to know about the "art" of Bobbie Ann Mason.) How can a critic with so rare a literary palate recommend Ms. Mason's work even as an *aperitif* to the 12-course meal prepared by his literary hero, William Faulkner? The answer is precisely that you *do* have to have some fun at this game.

In addition to being a critic, George Garrett is a novelist, playwright, and teacher, busy with wider occupations that have naturally and inevitably set their stamp on the criticism itself. Garrett's critical writing is never academic in the usual and pejorative sense of the word, substituting as it does a poet's imagination and intuition for the desiccated pedantry of the literary scholar. It is, however, pedagogical, meaning that the motivating intent of the critic is identical to that of the professor—to make the subject of discussion as interesting as possible to an audience most of which can be safely assumed to have little or no prior concern for the material. No latter-day professor of English or creative writing can permit himself the luxury of restricting the syllabus to good authors and valuable literary work; the *Zeitgeist* compels him to include the popular and the topical even when it is meretricious, or at best mediocre. But if you must teach Barth and Vonnegut and Mason and Ann Beattie, you cannot do it without gusto and enthusiasm, no matter how false and auto-inspired. And it cannot be easy, when class is over, simply to shut off that enthusiasm in the privacy of your study, face-to-face with a typewriter and a deadline.

What matters, since Garrett apparently has no ambition to reconstitute the Western literary canon on his own, is not that he is capable of overpraising undeserving writers but that he is a brilliant exegete of the work of good and superior ones, as well as of those whom he professes "the masters." His essay "A Matter of Style in *The Great Gatsby*" ("Thus behind its seemingly bland and polite surface, *Gatsby* is, in many ways, a wildly experimental novel, a trying out of what would become familiar, if more various, strategies of our serious literature and, especially, of the range of our literary language") is a freshly original piece of criticism that should interest Matthew Bruccoli, while M. E. Bradford might be suitably impressed by Garrett's "The Influence of William Faulkner," as well as by his essays concerning Faulkner's early poetry and literary reviews. Perhaps the virtuoso piece of the two volumes is the result of a first-class literary sensibility applied to a second-class literary work that is nonetheless the product of a genuine writer. "My Silk Purse and Yours," originally published in 1968 by the *Hollins Critic*, is a lengthy essay-review of *Making It*, the notorious autobiography of the youthful Norman Podhoretz that in retrospect appears to have been a prophecy of the cult of literary celebrity that prevails in America today and that has become the *sine qua non* of artistic reputation and commercial success. "Though *Making It* appears to be a simple-minded *fabliau*," Garrett concludes,

> it is more complex and more fabulous. The "real" Norman Podhoretz, the author of the book, has created an allegory of pilgrimage. But it is a *false* pilgrimage. The protagonist arrives at what is clearly Babylon and is fooled by the "Welcome to Jerusalem" signs. There he is, up to his knees in the Slough of Despond and trying to make the best of it because all the maps say this is the Delectable Mountain. In his innocence he wants to believe and do right. Innocence is the key to character. He is the bumbling naif of great satire.

"Ladies in Boston Have Their Hats" (*My Silk Purse and Yours*), having described WASP humor as "complex, incorporating many of the primal WASP assumptions and attitudes . . . even as it ridicules much that is most characteristic of WASP society," goes on to identify Tom Wolfe's work as the reaction of an upper-middle-class Southern WASP to the vulgarity and hypocrisy of New York City. The insight is important beyond its immediate critical validity, since Garrett—in "The Star System" and "Once More Into the Breach, Dear Friends, Once More"—presents an essentially Wolfean view of the New York publishing and literary world that Wolfe himself has so far not shown the courage to write about, though he long ago dispatched the New York art establishment from which he stands at a safe remove. If George Garrett had qualms about razzing the dispensers of his own contracts and advances, it doesn't show. The "stars" of contemporary American writing, he insists, are generally speaking no better—and no worse—than the run of their unsung and unpaid fellow writers, being more or less the beneficiaries of luck, publicity, and aggressive hype by their editors and publishers. And in "Southern Literature Here and Now," he attacks the "system of artificial celebrity which no longer describes a real condition in the literary world . . . [i]f it ever did . . . [but which] coincides with the commercial and self-serving aims of publishers and the whole periphery of professional intellectuals around them." Garrett even argues that "the *concept* of the master artist" is exactly that, a conceit from which the writer himself acquires a model and the scholar an image, while "the critic accepts the notion of a few masters, surrounded by a crowd of apprentices and journeymen, because it makes public



criticism, as it is understood, possible."

The process by which the old Republic of Letters has been supplanted by the new literary Versailles-on-Hudson is simply another of the many examples of how America in the past century has been transformed from a democracy into an oligarchy under cover of a rhetorical blanket celebrating "democratization." George Garrett—Professor of Creative Writing at the University of Virginia and recipient of many prestigious literary grants and awards—is enough of an establishmentarian to have witnessed the process firsthand, and enough of a republican at heart to denounce and deplore it. c

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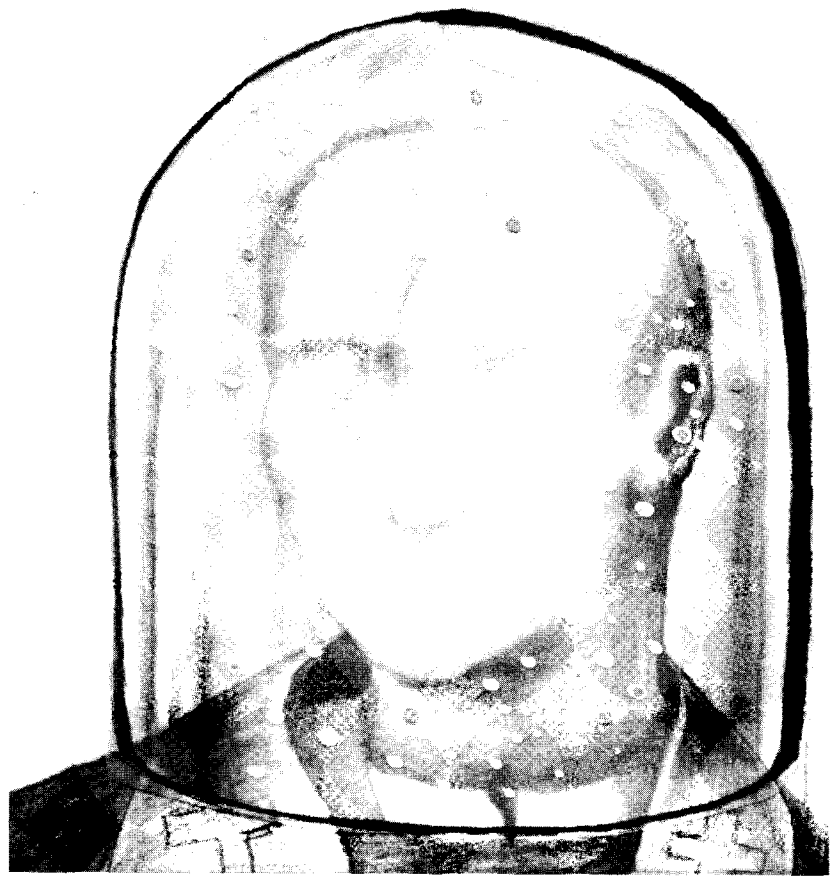
Doing Well; Done Better

by Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr.

"These monstrous views, . . . these venemous teachings."
—Pope Leo XIII on socialism



Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Doing Well and Doing Good: The Challenge to the Christian Capitalist
by Richard John Neuhaus
New York: Doubleday;
312 pp., $22.00

◆

According to the jacket copy of *Doing Well and Doing Good*, Richard John Neuhaus is "one of the most prominent religious intellectuals" of our time (which helps explain our time). Neuhaus argues that while "Christianity has had nothing to say" to businessmen, now "the spirit" is calling on them "to make a buck." That is why he—a Lutheran minister who became a Catholic priest—decided to write about the "spirituality of economic enterprise" in a book based on John Paul II's encyclical *Centesimus Annus*. The idea might have made an interesting work, but, despite the breezy blasphemy, this isn't it. Much of *Doing Well and Doing Good* consists of a truncated version of the widely available encyclical and a pedestrian, if largely unobjectionable, commentary on it. In the introductory and concluding chapters, however, Neuhaus proclaims the good news of the democratic welfare state and of its avatar, Martin Luther King, Jr.

"It was a grace of my life," says Neuhaus, "to work personally with Dr. King for several years as a liaison between his Southern Christian Leadership Conference and other social movements of the time." What social movements those were, Neuhaus having been an open leftist in those days, or why King keeps his ill-gotten doctorate in death, Neuhaus doesn't say. Instead, we are asked to believe that King was "above all a Christian minister" whose "I Have a Dream Speech" was "a powerful and almost perfect articulation of the Puritan-Lockean Synthesis."

This is nonsense, Neuhaus counting on his readers being unfamiliar with the literature which demonstrates that King: one, stole virtually every word he "wrote," from high school to his last sermon; two, rejected the central claims of Christianity in graduate school and never returned to them; three, had a sex life worthy of Magic Johnson; four, advocated racial redistributionism; five, called himself a Marxist in private; and six, coordinated his schedule, finances, speeches, publications, and strategy with members of the American Communist Party. Far from right-wing revisionism, this is standard history as found, for example, in David Garrow's Pulitzer Prize-

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winning *Bearing the Cross* and Taylor Branch's *Parting the Waters*. (The expert on King's plagiarism is, of course, Theodore Pappas of *Chronicles*.)

As to the "Puritan-Lockean Synthesis," King's dream (when it wasn't of other men's wives or of socialism) was of cash. At the welfare rally in Washington, D. C., where he gave his famous speech, King said that America had "given the Negro people a bad check," returned "marked 'insufficient funds.'" But in our country's "great vaults," there was plenty of money to recompense blacks for slavery and discrimination, and he was there to claim it. So when King talked about justice rolling down like a "mighty stream," he meant a stream of income. Yet he represented something more pernicious than redistributionism. His cultural impact was to help secularize, and finally to supplant, Christianity, so that today King's birthday gets more attention in the public square than Christ's. Neuhaus knows all this, and yet he writes: "Like Martin Luther King, Jr., John Paul has a dream": "democratic capitalism." But democratic capitalism—neoconese for social democracy—is never mentioned by the Pope.

Just how capitalistic, by the way, is democratic capitalism? The "business economy," Neuhaus writes, does not "appeal to the moral imagination" in the way socialism does. "Profit seeking" is "neither pretty nor edifying." But Trotskyite communism? Now there was a great vision: "Irving Howe spoke also for many Christians," says Neuhaus, "when he declared, 'Socialism is the name of our dream.' No one in his right mind dreams about capitalism." Oh? Many Americans dream about having their own businesses, while few of us long for the liquidation of the kulaks.

More broadly, the capitalist dream is of secure private property, free capital and labor markets, minimal taxes, small government, and sound money. This is a just economic system, without the thievery of special interests or the tyranny of the state. But to Neuhaus, four "eminent Americans" have "in this century" helped us think through "the ideas that can sustain a free society": John Dewey, Walter Lippmann, John Rawls, and Richard Rorty. So our guides are supposed to be: a social engineer who wrecked American education, a progressivist pamphleteer who got us into World War I, an egalitarian who measures all societies by the happiness of their bums, and a popularizer of anti-Western deconstructionism.

It is just not respectable, says Neuhaus, to be against "big government," and he denounces "libertarians" who advocate a "free and unfettered market," equating them with the "radical capitalists" the Pope criticizes. Neuhaus seems to have no knowledge of the Late Scholastic theologians, whose vision inspired the economic core of this papal document. (Not that the Pope's "radical capitalists" are straw men; left-libertarians like federal appeals judge Richard Posner vainly seek to link free markets and free sex.)

Neuhaus reserves special derision for paleolibertarianism, a "confused mingling of market economics and what is today called 'paleoconservatism.'" Confused? This was the hallmark of the pre-neocon modern right, the prewar Old Right, 19th-century conservatives like Tocqueville, and most of the Founding Fathers, all of whom advocated economic freedom and traditional social institutions.

Unlike the author of the encyclical he claims to endorse, Neuhaus offers no fundamental critique of Washington's planning and redistributionist schemes. He thinks it just fine that ever since Lincoln, American politics has exalted an antisubsidiarity principle: state aggression against every institution of society. These days, not even the smallest mom-and-pop grocery store in rural Wyoming is immune from the dictates of a dozen federal agencies. The Pope, on the other hand, insists on subsidiarity: the idea that the state may not interfere with the authority of community, family, business, and church. And he criticizes the neocons' beloved welfare state for causing a "loss of human energies," an "inordinate increase of public agencies," "bureaucratic ways of thinking," and "an enormous increase in spending."

The Pope does not suggest, as Neuhaus says he does, "that the democratic idea is integral to a theologically and historically informed understanding of human nature." Democracy has its uses for the Pope, but it is not in itself a high moral principle. In fact, says John Paul II: "Those who are convinced that they know the truth and firmly adhere to it are considered unreliable from a democratic point of view, since they do not accept that truth is determined by the majority." The Pope is indicting those who elevate democracy over religion. But Neuhaus claims the Pope is "here throwing down the gauntlet to those who claim that religion poses a danger to democracy," as if the latter were more important than the former.

Neuhaus says he believes in the "Social Gospel," identifying it with "the Christian project in history." In "the Christian scheme of things," he claims, "we enter the Kingdom of God by the permission of the poor." Ridiculous: we enter the Kingdom of God through grace, and because we have kept the faith and lived it. We have duties to the poor, of course, but they are hardly the sum and substance of Christianity. For Neuhaus, however, "our most elementary duty of love" is "for our neighbor." So much for the Gospel and its injunction that we are first to love the Lord our God with all our heart and mind and strength.

Neuhaus pays little attention to the fact that the encyclical, although it treats political economy, is a religious document. As such, it is full of pastoral advice for the businessman in the pew. The Pope defends the free market against socialist attacks, but he warns businessmen that they are responsible to more than the price system. Consumers may demand abortions, rap records, or sex books by Madonna, but no decent entrepreneur may seek to fill that demand. Capitalism flourishes only within a moral order. That does not mean, *pace* Neuhaus, that we need the 1964 Civil Rights Act, but rather that businessmen should keep an eye on eternity while meeting their earthly needs. That is the challenge to the Christian capitalist—not making MLK a cultural icon.

Neuhaus misses most of this, yet he never passes up a chance to denounce anyone to his right, including those who sympathize with the Church of the time before Vatican II. He defines "modernity" as a virtue and "holding out against modernity" (which he ascribes to the Council of Trent) as an evil. This is a most un-Catholic position. Perhaps he adopts it because neoconservatism is a modern phenomenon. It is understandable that he should want to assure neoconservatives that their well-paid missionary, Richard John Neuhaus, is doing well. Whether he is doing good is another matter. c

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Rehabilitating Poe

by Gregory McNamee

Edgar Allan Poe: His Life and Legacy
by Jeffrey Meyers
New York: Charles Scribner's;
348 pp., $30.00

◆

Edgar Allan Poe was the finest American writer to be transformed into a "personality" in his own lifetime and, like François Villon, to be known less for his work than for his person. As is so often the case with figures of public celebrity, the facts of Poe's life have been obscured by layers of legend, many of them perpetuated in the learned literature by scholars who should know better. Jeffrey Meyers, a California professor who has given us sturdy biographies of Ernest Hemingway and Joseph Conrad, makes a valuable contribution to Poe studies with his new life of the writer, particularly by distinguishing fact from long-standing fiction. He had an unenviable task, given the many Parson Weemses who have inserted their agenda into the biographical record.

Poe, as is well known, lived a miserable life. He was born on January 19, 1809, in Boston (the same year, Meyers points out, as Mendelssohn, Darwin, Gladstone, Lincoln, and Tennyson, all of whom outlived Poe) to an alcoholic actor, David Poe, and an unstable actress, Eliza, who died in a state of semilunacy and deep poverty after David deserted the family. Young Edgar was adopted by a family friend, John Allan, a mean-spirited Scottish immigrant who gave the boy an admirable education but little else. The Allan family lived in the English village of Stoke Newington during Poe's childhood, and there he attended the school whose halls Daniel Defoe had graced two centuries before. He acquired a classical education that rivaled any university instruction in the United States, and as a student at the University of Virginia Poe easily earned the highest honors in classical and modern languages.

He also earned the wrath of a number of creditors, for Poe borrowed heavily to finance an already evident pattern of drunkenness and gambling. A school friend recalled him as "very excitable & restless, at times wayward, melancholic & morose, but again—in his better moods frolicksome, full of fun & a most attractive and agreeable companion. To calm and quiet the excessive nervous excitability under which he labored, he would too often put himself under the influence of that 'Invisible Spirit of Wine.'" John Allan had not given Edgar enough money to pay for his room and board, much less his extracurricular excesses, and the young man would never be out of debt again.

Poe joined the army under the name of Edgar A. Perry in May 1827, as an enlisted man. Assigned to the commissariat, he kept records and correspondence for his officers, among whom he became a favorite and a model soldier. In only 19 months he attained the highest enlisted grade, regimental sergeant major. For reasons that are not entirely clear, however, Poe cajoled his way out of the enlisted ranks and would thereafter never admit to his years in the service, no matter how exemplary they might have been: when called on to account for his whereabouts in 1827 and 1828, Poe would variously hint that he had been off fighting with Byron in the Greek Rebellion or intriguing in St. Petersburg with enemies of the czar. Meyers carefully unveils Poe's time in military service, and if he cannot help us decipher Poe's shunning of the responsibilities that come with outstanding achievement, he at least does not resort to the psychobabble of so many modern biographies.

Poe was appointed to West Point in 1829, earned top grades, and became very popular among his classmates for his acerbic verses on cadet life. (His fellow plebes paid for the publication of his first book of poems but were disappointed to note that his West Point-specific doggerel had given way to serious verse.) Once again Poe, having succeeded at some chosen task, decided to chuck it all, breaking general orders 13 times in an effort to be expelled. For his trouble he was court-martialed for "gross neglect of duties" and dishonorably discharged from the army in 1830. Again, Poe would not own up to these dark episodes in his résumé, and Meyers' reconstruction is an important merit of his book.

Earlier biographers have shown Poe as dissolute from the start, but Meyers dates his decline from his expulsion from the academy. Although immensely wealthy by the standards of his time, John Allan now refused to give his adopted son any support whatever, and he eventually wrote Edgar out of his will. Poe turned to journalism and descended permanently into poverty; he sank into chronic alcoholism as well, prompting the owner of his first employer, the *Southern Literary Messenger*, to write him this note: "No man is safe who drinks before breakfast! No man can do so, and attend to business properly." A liquid diet condemned Poe both to failures of his own making and to a marked inability to deal with failures beyond his control; he was all but paralyzed, for instance, when his sole novel, *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* (1838), did not find the large market he felt certain it deserved.

In a neat bit of detective work, Meyers retraces Poe's next (and hitherto unknown) career move: he anonymously wrote a textbook of malacology, plagiarizing most of it from a Scottish primer published the year before. (Meyers notes that this was the only of Poe's books to go into a second printing in his lifetime.) Poe's binge drinking also helped

LIBERAL ARTS

PRESIDENT ELVIS

"'We wanted to make sure that we chose a cross section of people and performers that would, to the extent possible, represent every sector of society.'
–Sally Aman, spokeswoman for the presidential inaugural parade committee, on why the event will include Elvis impersonators and a precision lawn chair marching team."
—*from the January 3* Chicago Tribune.

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transform hard-earned friendships with such writers as Nathaniel Hawthorne and James Russell Lowell into feuds; Lowell was later moved to write, "Mr. Poe is at once the most discriminative, philosophical, and fearless critic upon imaginative works who has written in America . . . [but he] seems sometimes to mistake his phial of prussic-acid for his inkstand." Poe's inconstancy kept him from keeping a steady schedule, let alone realizing his promise, and, despite the success of stories like "The Gold Bug," Poe earned only $288 in 1847, $166 in 1848, and $275 in 1849; Meyers computes that Poe earned a lifetime total of $6,200 for his work.

When Poe died in 1849—of liver failure, hypoglycemia, and diabetes—the mythmaking was already in swing. It accelerated for years, while the actual readership of his books declined until the Second World War, when popular editions for soldiers led to renewed interest in his work. Jeffrey Meyers does a fine job of destroying the falsehoods that surround the writer's life. More important, his unearthing of the real facts of the case gives us a picture not of the ghoulish, even demonic writer of old, but of a confused soul seemingly bent on his own destruction. Any subsequent reading of Poe will be enriched by Meyers' careful labors.

Gregory McNamee is a freelance writer living in Tucson, Arizona.

La Prima Donna

by J.O. Tate

Maria Meneghini Callas
by Michael Scott
Boston: Northeastern University Press; 312 pp., $29.95

◆

Undoubtedly the greatest singer in the world in her time and since, Maria Callas (1923-1977) needs no introduction. What she does need is the highly intelligent and discriminating attention that Michael Scott has devoted to her. It is Mr. Scott who needs an introduction—to some at least, if not to everyone.

Michael Scott will be familiar to anyone who has read his volumes *The Record of Singing* or *The Great Caruso* or who has been aware of his work as the founder and artistic director of the London Opera Society. He is internationally known as a critic, connoisseur, and analyst of vocal art and has assiduously cultivated a historical perspective that gives his commentary a unique authority. That angle of vision—or should I say, of audition—is particularly revealing as concentrated on Maria Callas, an artist who remains "difficult" even 16 years after her death.

I suppose that Mr. Scott's treatment of Callas can be called revisionist, though I do not use the term invidiously. I mean, first, that he accounts for her in a completely fresh way; second, that he treats her with the same "objectivity" he would extend to some singer born 50 years before her; and third, that he separates "life" from "art" in a way that is almost unique in comparison not only to the preexistent commentary about Callas but to the norms of contemporary "biography." As a result, Scott's *Callas* is an incisive and illuminating treatment of a tormented topic.

Why is Callas a tough assignment? There is the problem not so much of her fame as of her celebrity—the Parisian gown-glossy photo-publicity agent-lunch on the yacht-but watch those calories-Aristotle Onassis-night-club-Elsa Maxwell nonsense with which she congested her life after her best singing days were gone. There is the problem as well of Callas as an industrial commodity—all those EMI CDs are still paying off, though few of them are as good as the live performances on the Melodram label of *Norma*, *Lucia*, *La Sonnambula*, and *Anna Bolena*. There is the problem of conflicting testimonies, including those by the subject. There is the problem, perhaps the paramount one, of an idiosyncratic voice that was abused. There is the problem of Callas's lonely last days: the cruelty of her self-imposed fate is so sad that sentimentality is hard to resist. Worst of all, there is the Herculean difficulty of rescuing her from the "legends" and gossip and clichés—that quicksand in which Maria Callas has been buried since long before her death and for which she herself was partly responsible.

Michael Scott has emphasized the musician over the woman, the artist over the human being. He has had the courage to meet Callas on her own ground and at her greatest, not out of her real context and at her weakest. His extensive knowledge of musical performance has released him to view her in the perspective of history. He understands her neither as a canary, a clothes horse, nor a camp figure, but as a great artist to be compared to other giants. And so he shows her, meanwhile casting light upon the degeneration of music in our day. Of the *Vespri Siciliani* of 1951 in Florence, he writes:

> The Act IV andante, "*Arrigo! ah parli a un core*," is one of her most distinguished pieces of singing. How responsive is her voice and how complete her rhythmic control. She reminds us how rhythmic mastery is, or was, a basic feature of great performing musicians: we may think of Patti, Battistini, Paderewski, Chaliapin, Caruso, Rachmaninoff, Kreisler, Cortot and many other famous singers and instrumentalists. But since the Second World War it has become steadily compromised by the declining vitality of classical music. Rhythm, we should not forget, is the heart beat of music, it will not stay vital for long without it. Nowadays the increasing influence, directly and indirectly, of Afro-American popular music has led, in the interpretation of classical music, to a semantic confusion between rhythm and beat. Whereas "beat" is certainly rhythmic, the performer is locked into it. Rhythm, on the other hand, does not just beat time. If we listen to Callas in this andante, as she repeats the words, "*Io t'amo*," the first time she marks the notes a little ahead of time, but so discreetly as not to need any accommodation from the accompaniment, the second time, she is at one with it. This is what Garcia calls, "an exquisite feeling for rhythm, an imperturbable poise."

How right of Scott to compare Callas not only with his favorite singers, but with great instrumentalists as well. And how right to identify her sense of rhythm, her ability to phrase and to express the *Gestalt* of a particular passage, as she so often did in a unique and unforgettable manner. Such an accom-

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plishment goes beyond vocalism and distinguishes a great musician. Other people have pretty voices or nice clothes or get photographed in nightclubs, but only Callas could sing Norma and Elvira and Violetta as she did at her best. Her immortality is secure, even if the most refined estimate of her accomplishment is only now beginning—with Michael Scott.

Without credit of received opinion and without compromise of human frailty, Mr. Scott has thoroughly explored the life and art of Maria Callas—a woman whom he sees as truly alive only through her performances. He emphasizes the early years as her greatest ones and punctures the notion that hers was a specifically dramatic talent. I don't completely agree with every one of his judgments—I like the 1955 Berlin *Lucia* and the 1957 *Anna Bolena* better than he does—but I find his treatment more than convincing. I never thought anyone could elevate my regard for Callas. As it is, he has taught me much about her—and something too about straight thinking in the composition of a biography.

In the context of excellence I will mention that the word "fulsome" is misused more than once and that comma splices abound—there are two in the paragraph quoted above. But as Emily Litella used to say, "Never mind." Scott's life of Callas has fixed for us the image of an heroic talent—the gift that drove her to sing recitatives better than her rivals could sing arias. He has even reported acne and dandruff in order to dispel a cosmetized image that nevertheless represented someone grand. That is not to say that the woman Maria Callas, as distinct from the musician, is not here. I mean only that for once a contemporary biography does not drown in details: the tail does not wag the dog, or perhaps I should say that the train of the gown does not direct the diva. It was the grandeur of the artist that made the woman of interest, and not the other way around. Yes, Callas is here; the truth of her personal life is here. But that truth is held firmly in proportion to its value and significance. Scott knows well the magnitude of the real achievement and quotes an early witness to the labor that beauty demands: "When she came on the first day of rehearsals I gave her the score and told her that I would go through her part the next day from start to finish. But when she arrived I found that she knew it all in detail, phrase by phrase. . . . She had learned it all in one day. . . . That is talent. It was not just a question of having a voice, it was also the love of hard work. . . . Talent means a strength which impels you to study." W. B. Yeats—who wrote "Adam's Curse"—likewise understood, "That we must labour to be beautiful."

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

The Right Fork

by Brian Doherty

Better Than Plowing and Other Personal Essays
by James M. Buchanan
Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 194 pp., $23.95

◆

"I ask myself again why anyone would find interest in the private dimensions of my own history," muses Nobel laureate economist James M. Buchanan in his new collection of personal and intellectual autobiographical essays. The question, embedded in an essay entitled "Country Aesthetic," which explores the manifold and profound meanings that the concept of country, and more importantly the concept of owning the land on which one lives, has for Buchanan, answers itself. Exploring the mind of a writer and thinker of Buchanan's caliber is its own reward.

Buchanan is the founding father and linchpin of the "Virginia School" of economics, whose founding work was accomplished at the University of Virginia at Charlottesville. The Virginia School's prime contribution, for which Buchanan was awarded the Nobel Prize in economics in 1986, is public choice theory, which upsets the shibboleths of interventionist economists (who assume government to be the perfect solution to all perceived "market failures") by applying the standard of self-interested *homo economicus* to government actors as well as private ones.

This approach allows for consideration of the notion—heretical to big-government economists—that governments can fail in their supposed goals of disinterestedly pursuing the larger social good in the same way they like to accuse free markets of failing. They can no longer stack the analytical deck by comparing actual market performance to an arid, unrealistic vision of disinterested government perfection.

As Buchanan puts it, "the lasting contribution of public choice theory has been to correct this obvious imbalance in analysis. Any institutional comparison that is worthy of serious considerations must compare relevant alternatives; if market organization is to be replaced by politicized order . . . the two institutional structures must be evaluated on the basis of predictions as to how they will actually work. Political failure, as well as market failure, must become central to the comprehensive analysis that precedes normative judgment."

Better Than Plowing provides only a brief and general summary of the economic thought for which Buchanan is famous. And if the public choice approach strikes the reader as the application of mere common sense, not worthy of world-class accolades, Buchanan feels the same way ("my surprise . . . is . . . at the failure of other economists to have acknowledged the simple and the obvious, which is all that I have ever claimed my work to be"); and yet it is in large part thanks to him that it has become customary in economics to apply such skeptical analysis to the actions of government.

Buchanan's wise and personable modesty about his achievements pervades the book, as does a quiet pride in his Southern roots and the self-sufficiency of his country lifestyle. He describes himself as "a country boy from Middle Tennessee, educated in rural public schools and a local public teachers college, who is not associated with an establishment university, who has never shared the academically fashionable soft left ideology, who has worked in a totally unorthodox subject matter with very old-fashioned tools of analysis." He wants his reader to grasp the lesson that "if Jim Buchanan can get a Nobel Prize, anyone can." It is charming of Buchanan to hold this notion, reflecting well on his generosity of character. But the essays collected in this book put the lie to it. In his solid intellectual analysis, his self-sufficiency, and his love of work, Buchanan proves himself a better man than just anyone.

Buchanan offers his rural boyhood,

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his early college education at the Middle Tennessee State Teachers College, and his work on the Operations Staff of the Commander-in-Chief of the Pacific theater during World War II as examples of his typicality; this could have been the life of any other Southern boy of his generation, he suggests. But it seems as if these experiences forged instead his singularity. He writes nonelegiacally about his working childhood on a farm and the day-to-day deprivations that did not seem to him to be deprivations; about being a day student riding into town and back to the farm in his early college days; of the precise and never-ending work of tracking location and direction of movement for the U. S. fleet in the Pacific under Admiral Chester W. Nimitz. He presents his life as if he believes it could have been anyone's and could have turned him into anyone.

He muses on the nature of fate and circumstance in the words of a country tune he composed in his youth ("My mother discouraged me from even listening to country music, but it was so much a part of Middle Tennessee that all of us variously imagined ourselves to be songwriters"): "There are too many forks in the road, / There are too many forks in the road, / And I never could learn / Not to take the wrong turn. / There are too many forks in the road."

While contemplating the way any different choice along the path of his life would have deposited him in a place miles and worlds away from the man he is now, Buchanan is lead to the conclusion that "exogenous event and chance may be far more relevant than personal choices." He may believe this. But the character forged through the choices of his rural, Southern boyhood survives today in the almost transcendent satisfaction he experiences in the "physical engagement with the earth itself" that his current life (in a home that he largely built himself from the ground up, on land where he grows his own food) provides him. And this character, forged and tested through the choices he has made, is a necessary part of the man he reveals in this homey, sensible, and delightful book.

His character also defines the economic research program that earned him his renown. His dedication to free trade is rooted in his Southern identity: "I sensed that the free trade principle was indeed central to the traditional democratic-southern-populist set of values" and that "this principle had been subverted . . . by the protectionist-monopolist interest of the East and North." His experience of discrimination against himself and his fellow Southerners by a cadet officer in the Army gave him a permanent dislike for the entrenched interests of Eastern elites who lord over and disdain the bulk of the citizenry.

His rural background, far removed from the depredations of the government whose skewed workings Buchanan has spent a career analyzing, also seems key in cementing individuals and their choices at the heart of his economic approach. Buchanan may poor-mouth himself and his economic achievements, but that is merely the pleasing modesty of the Southern boy who has worked, worked hard and worked well; and who has earned the sense of independence, security, and achievement that he seems to have taken from his life. Buchanan comes across as a delightful and intellectually powerful man; and, as like precedes from like, he has produced a delightful and intellectually powerful set of memoirs.

Brian Doherty writes from Washington, D.C.

Classic Colonialism

by Wayne Lutton

Hold Your Tongue: Bilingualism and the Politics of "English Only"
by James Crawford
Reading, Massachusetts: Addison-Wesley; 324 pp., $24.95

◆

Almost alone among the peoples of the world, the United States has largely been spared—at least until recently—the bitter conflicts that plague countries whose citizens do not share a common language. Since the early 17th century, immigrants from diverse backgrounds have settled here. In the past, it was understood that in exchange for enjoying opportunities for personal development and economic advancement and a measure of political equality unavailable elsewhere, newcomers would learn English, acquire a useful skill, and participate in community life by becoming citizens. That was what "Americanization" involved. This covenant between America and successive generations of immigrants worked pretty well as long as it was observed by both parties. But this unwritten compact has undergone a drastic revision since the 1960's.

In the wake of Lyndon Johnson's landslide victory in 1964 over Barry Goldwater, the Great Society Congress passed a new immigration act that departed from our previous policy of well-regulated entry. The "national origin" quotas that had been in effect since the early 1920's were eliminated. The 1965 act established a system emphasizing family ties over other considerations. Although proponents of the new law, such as its sponsor in the Senate, Ted Kennedy, claimed that the act would eliminate discrimination, what it actually accomplished—just as Senator Sam Ervin predicted it would—was discrimination against traditional immigrant groups in favor of natives of Third World countries. By exploiting provisions for family reunification, individuals with large families and many relatives were thus able to practice what has since become known as "chain migration." The entry of millions of people from Latin America and Asia coincided with a breakdown of institutional support for assimilation, exemplified by bilingual education and voting. Later, affirmative action preferences were extended to those possessing limited fluency in English.

In *Hold Your Tongue*, James Crawford, a former Washington editor of *Education Week*, discusses the rise of bilingualism and of the grass-roots opposition to it that emerged in the early 1980's. Congress passed the Bilingual Education Act in 1968; by the mid-1970's the federal government was funding an assortment of programs in 26 different languages. Although proficiency in English is supposed to be a condition for naturalization, in 1975 Congress mandated that bilingual ballots be made available.

The Supreme Court ventured into this arena with its *Lau* v. *Nichols* decision in 1974. In this case, the court decreed that public schools must take "affirmative steps" to compensate for a child's lack of fluency in English. In 1982, in *Plyler* v. *Doe*, the Supreme Court ruled five to four that states must provide public education at the elemen-

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tary and secondary levels to children of illegal aliens. These two Supreme Court decisions have reinforced the drive to institutionalize bilingualism in American education.

From the outset, ambiguity surrounded the purpose and definition of bilingualism. At first, the public was led to believe that the emphasis was on the efficient transition in the short term to proficiency in English. However, proponents of bilingual education (including the National Education Association, Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, the National Association for Bilingual Education, the American Civil Liberties Union, and the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund) have helped redirect it from concentration on the rapid acquisition of English to a confusing array of programs providing for long-term instruction in the student's native tongue—even, as in the case of the Hmong, when the language has no written form. Supported by ideologues in Jimmy Carter's new Department of Education, "bilingual education" quickly emerged as a growth industry. A demand was created for Spanish-speaking teachers; one Department of Education directive even decreed that teachers in "bilingual" programs were not required to speak English!

While Crawford warmly endorses bilingual programs, he admits that they rest on shaky pedagogical foundations. He cites Kenji Hakuta, a bilingual educator who concedes that "an awkward tension blankets the lack of empirical demonstration of the success of bilingual education programs. Someone promised bacon, but it's not there." Indeed, a study by the Carter Administration of 38 Spanish-English projects of at least four years duration, released in 1978, discovered that most "bilingual" programs extend a student's reliance upon a minority language rather than speed his transition to English. Few of those who were deficient in English when they first enrolled in the programs acquired proficiency. The report concluded that there simply was no evidence that bilingual instruction helped Title VII students perform markedly better in either English or Spanish. The author neglects to refer to this study in his discussion of the topic.

Crawford, perhaps unintentionally, confirms what critics of bilingualism have suspected from the outset: that proponents of bilingualism have their own special agenda that is only marginally concerned with "education." The author candidly remarks, almost offhandedly, that "bilingual education was more than an issue of language; it was an issue of power. . . . Obviously, there were political motives behind these educational reforms. . . . In sum, the Federal government had thrown its weight behind a costly and far-reaching change in the way American schools were run—all with minimal discussion or scrutiny." Though the case for bilingualism presented by minority activists and NEA lobbyists is not a persuasive one, this does not discourage Crawford from devoting most of his book to attacking the critics of bilingual programs.

He chooses to dub the opposition the "English Only" movement, a mischievous misrepresentation of its position. In 1981, then California Senator S.I. Hayakawa—an internationally respected semanticist and Canadian immigrant of Japanese ancestry—introduced a constitutional amendment to designate English as "the official language of the United States." Senator Steve Symms explained the purpose of the amendment:

> The English Language Amendment is intended to stop the practice of voting in foreign languages; it is intended to teach children who don't know English through appropriate programs; it is intended to make English the only language for official proceedings of governments at all levels; it is intended to make the acceptance of English a condition of statehood incumbent upon all territories aspiring to that status.

Contrary to the impression one gets from Crawford, the amendment would *not* regulate language spoken by individuals in their private capacities; its supporters actually encourage citizens to become fluent in foreign languages.

By 1990, 17 states had adopted laws designating English as their official language. The author neglects to mention that many Hispanic-Americans have supported these laws in such states as California, Arizona, Colorado, and Florida. First- and second-generation Americans have been among the leading advocates of officializing English, which Crawford admits "makes it problematic to pin charges of nativism, ethnocentrism, or racism on those who hold such views." Yet Crawford accuses critics of bilingualism of "exploiting the politics of resentment." At the same time, he makes it clear that "*immigration is the paramount reason for linguistic diversity in the United States*" (his emphasis). He goes on to observe that supporters of bilingualism "are mistaken to assume that antibilingual fervor reflects little more than racism. Anglos' dispossession is real . . . there is no hiding the complications or the attendant shifts in power and status."

Exactly. As former Senator Eugene McCarthy points out in his trenchant new book, A *Colony of the World: The United States Today*, "If one thinks of the classic definition of colonialism—the arrival of large numbers of people who impose their cultural values and language on the preexisting society—it is hard not to define the current wave of immigration as a colonizing force on the United States. What distinguishes the United States from other colonized societies is that we have the power to prevent it, and choose not to use it." The bilingual controversy is an aspect of a larger problem. The central issue is whether the current American majority has the will to protect its interests and preserve its culture.

Wayne Lutton is the associate editor of the Social Contract.

LIBERAL ARTS

HUS ORIGINAL?

"I have kept the editing of this 1855 first edition to a minimum. Some spellings (i.e., *loafe*) have been modernized, and Whitman's language, though remarkably nonsexist for his time, has been humanized where appropriate (i.e., *human* or *person* substituted for *man* when the context clearly indicates no sexual reference is intended). Humanist personal pronouns (*hu, hus, hum*, pronounced *who, whose, whom*) have been substituted in cases where distinction of gender is ambiguous, irrelevant, or misleading."

—*from* A.S. Ash's *preface to* The Original 1855 Edition of Leaves of Grass, *Bandanna Books, 1992.*

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Letter From Miami

by Alan R. Turin

The Unreported Story of Hurricane Andrew

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On August 24, 1992, shortly after 3 A.M., Hurricane Andrew hit the coast at Miami, in South Dade County, Florida. A "Category Four" hurricane on the Saper-Simpson Hurricane Scale, Andrew struck with 145 m.p.h. winds, making it the worst hurricane to hit Miami since 1926. In fact, this was the worst hurricane to hit a major American city in recorded history. It was the fifth hurricane I've experienced.

The physical destruction caused by the storm has been well and widely documented, but it is the response of the people in the Miami area to Andrew that now bears attention. There have been acts of great decency, examples of good will, and more than a few instances of heroics. All of this is nourishment for the soul. But there have also been many acts of great *in*decency and *ill* will that have not been reported, let alone discussed.

The one thing that linked Miami to Western civilization last August 23, the day before the storm, was electricity. Electricity was a weak reed. The next day Miami wallowed in barbarity. We were suddenly in the Third World. Though legally a part of the United States, we were no longer *of* the United States.

Miami is a city of transients. It started out less than a century ago as a winter resort for Yankees. First were the retirees from New York and New Jersey. Then came the Cubans in the 1960's. Currently it is the Haitians. After Castro but before now, Miami was an amalgam of Central and South Americans. In the last decade we have had four separate sets of race riots.

Perhaps because of these quickening waves of immigrants, Miami has never provided a sense of community for any one generation. We are not a Southern town, nor a Yankee enclave. We are not as civil as a U.N. cocktail party, but we are more than a couple of bomb blasts better than Beirut. Take away a booming economy, and things get ugly. Take away electricity, and things get vile.

The looting was a good measure of the vileness. A Jamaican food store, one block from my home, was looted the morning of the storm. It is one block from, and in direct sight of, the North Miami police station. Looters struck in South Dade while the wind was still at gale force. The police warned looters to stay away, sometimes even arresting them. Since arrest itself is hardly a deterrent in the best of times, it never stopped the looting after the storm. At my house we were without electricity for nearly seven days. A month later, 70,000 households were still without power. The neighborhoods with electricity resembled suburban America. Those without were in the Third World.

There were no shoot-to-kill orders issued by any of the authorities. In the old days, when natural disasters occurred, local governments knew that their capabilities to maintain order would be strained. Due to their preoccupation with the disaster at hand, officials would warn looters that they would be shot on sight. Since the disaster would overwhelm civil society's capacity to maintain a complete system of criminal justice, they set up an abbreviated version. This achieved simultaneously two salutary goals: first, it preserved some semblance of normalcy with reduced police; and second, dead looters would "encourage *les autres*." Friends of a free society, being suspicious of the state, don't cotton to these notions. But since such actions were tied to natural calamities, they did not become occasions for state aggrandizement.

The current thinking in Miami is that the police exist to protect lives, not property. Shooting looters, therefore, would mean placing a higher value on property than on human life. Unfortunately, when looters find the pickings easy and the restraints off, they lose other brakes on their antisocial impulses. The refusal to shoot looters only increased the disorder. Relief convoys were shot at and hijacked en route to disaster areas.

The looting decreased as neighborhoods reentered civilization—*i.e.*, got their electricity back. But what ultimately stopped the looting was a *dead* looter. From the beginning, people began toting guns and putting up warning signs. ("You loot, we shoot.") Gun-control rules were widely violated, especially the state-mandated three-day waiting period. Neighborhoods prepared to protect themselves avoided the worst of the looters.

On one occasion a group of thugs in a stolen van drove up to a home whose owner was out front speaking to an insurance adjuster. The homeowner had posted a sign warning looters to stay away. Thug number one jumped out and fired at the warning sign (this is now known as his "last mistake"). The homeowner fired his .357 magnum at less than ten feet and hit thug number one in the head. Thugs number two and three drove off and abandoned the van; thug number one was dead. News of the event spread across the area as a wonderful bright spot to counter recent travails. The looting stopped. Never had so many owed so much to one shot heard 'round the town.

Within a week of the hurricane, Governor "Walkin' Lawton" Chiles had reversed his prior decision not to ask for federal help in the form of the U.S. Army. Many soldiers were sent, including the Army's 82nd Airborne. The 82nd has in the last ten years seen a lot of military action. Grenada in 1983. Panama in 1989. Most recently, in our war with Iraq. Here in Miami, one squad on a search-and-rescue mission was almost disarmed by a criminal gang. The gang knew—as did the rest of Miami, thanks to the thoughtful reporters of the *Miami Herald*—that the Army had been sent on patrols with weapons but without ammunition. A gang accosted this squad and demanded their M-16s and other sidearms. The situation was tense. The officer in charge refused to disarm and eventually talked the gang out of the hand-over. It seems this officer lied to the gang and said the squad really *did* have ammunition and would use it to defend itself. It was a bluff that worked. After the incident the press no longer advertised the ammunition status of the assigned soldiery. Rumor has it that the Army quietly issued ammunition.

My own forays into the War Zone, as we called the area of total destruction,

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were as a volunteer attorney. The American Bar Association is contracted to provide free legal advice to victims of disasters, and when the call for assistance went out locally, four hundred of us responded. I spent days under tents set up by the U. S. Army giving *pro bono* legal help. Most of my work involved landlord-tenant law; half of my clients were landlords trying to determine their responsibilities, the other half were tenants trying to determine the same thing.

The strangest legal question I handled was from a fellow who had hotwired his neighbor's automobile. He was using it and wondering about the legal consequences. He also wanted to know if he could buy the car from its owner. Now, auto theft is a serious felony. In Miami you might actually get incarcerated for six months or more, if you do it enough times. The neighbor's house was utterly destroyed, and he had left his car behind. My "client" had been going to a local hospital to get a fracture reset and taking along a different neighbor for something else, when his car caught a branch that ripped out its tail pipe and gas tank. The two literally limped back home and then hotwired the neighbor's car. Since then the fellow had been using it to shuttle around for ice, medicine, and food. He had told the auto owner's son of this and was informed that the dad would be back in two weeks.

I drafted a note for him to offer to buy the car. I remarked that if these facts were true, he ran little risk of prosecution. I asked him where he was going now. I had told him to get to the medical station down the road to take care of the hatchet wound to his hand. (Don't ask.) He promised he would get to the aid station, but he was on his way north to Kendall to find a working car wash. He wanted to return the car clean!

Down on South Dixie Highway there is a tourist attraction, the Monkey Jungle. People go around in screened-over paths, while monkeys roam about freely. Hurricane Andrew destroyed the place, whereupon the monkeys fled into the surrounding area.

South Dade County is farm country. A lady who owns a farm and nursery there has a business selling chutney, canned fruits, preserves, and the like. Her place was badly damaged. As she put it to the press, the winds came and flattened everything. Then it was dark and silent. Power was out, phone lines down. A week passed with no change in the situation. Then the monkeys, wild with hunger, attacked her home. They fell upon the walls, roof, and windows. Screaming and pillaging the remnants of her adjacent shop, they tore through broken shelves and jars to get at the food. She was terrified by the experience, but a sense of the ludicrousness of the whole incident never left her. It was some kind of horrible, terrifying comedy.

The differences between the Miami of today and the one that experienced the hurricanes of the 1960's are depressing to contemplate. We lost power then, but not civilization. In 1964, my mother, sister, and I moved into our Miami home the very day Hurricane Cleo hit. We had no electricity for 17 days. We lined up for ice and gasoline. We cooked with my grandparents' gas stove. We bathed at a friend's house that had a gas water heater. Though I was only seven years old, I have a good memory for times past and I don't recall any massive looting going on. Hurricane Andrew blew through a city different from the one I grew up in. Gone was a respect for property. Gone was a fear of arrest or of being shot for looting. Not gone, exactly, but certainly weakened was a notion of self-sufficiency. Though much more prosperous than twenty years ago, the people of Miami are spiritually impoverished and downright helpless.

On the night of the storm, a local television weatherman, Brian Norcross, made a blunt point on the air. He said, "Folks, in a few hours, firefighters and police will be pulled off the streets. Nothing will be working very well for many weeks. You are going to be on your own. Help will *not* be a phone call away." What is significant is not the message itself, but that the message had to be given at all. The message is one that conservatives—no, that anybody with sense—would know and understand. But this time, it had to be given. And explained. And repeated. And re-explained. And translated into Spanish, Creole, and something less than the Queen's English. The Miami devastated by Hurricane Andrew was not the Miami that had persevered the storms of yesteryear.

Alan R. Turin is an attorney in private practice.

Letter From Puerto Rico

by Geoffrey Wagner

An Artful Success

◆

Half a century ago Puerto Rico was the poorest country in the West, including Haiti. At that time I was living penuriously in what was to become New York's Spanish Harlem, then the preserve of Italian immigrants. This Little Italy of the Upper East Side was virtually ruled by the colorful communist Congressman Vito Marcantonio, my next-door neighbor. From here I was able to monitor the bias and bigotry directed against the incoming Puerto Ricans by the fly-by-night mayors of the period—"Fugitive Bill" O'Dwyer (who coined the term "milk-bottle thieves" to describe the new immigrants) and Vincent Impellitteri—as well as the local bank managers, numbers-racket "civics clubs," and street-side vendors. All this has altered for the better, excepting perhaps the fish markets, then located under the picturesque old El.

In Puerto Rico Hispanics have now created, out of the highest population density in the Caribbean and few natural resources, a model community (for the area) with a standard of living way above that of neighboring countries. The immaculate new American Airlines hub created in the tatty old Luis Muñoz Marín Airport is outstanding testimony to investor confidence. For Puerto Rico has not gone to sleep on the laurels of tourism, with all its ancillary attractions—the vast resort hotels of Condado and Isla Verde, the famous phosphorescent bay at Parguera, the Camuy cave park, the multiple casinos; it has created a back-up manufacturing infrastructure whose share of per-capita gross domestic product ranks higher than any on mainland America, let alone that of adjacent Jamaica, lagging ten times behind and repeatedly forced into devaluations.

This infrastructure has provided a buffer against the fragility of those Caribbean economies that rely so heavily, often uniquely, on that fickle jade called tourism. Once prosperous Barbados, for instance, is today swallowing the kill-or-cure medicine of the IMF,

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requiring a large cut in its unproductive civil service or massive devaluation, while the banana islands will be in deep trouble when the European Community declines their (presently subsidized) fruit for cheaper and better substitutes out of Costa Rica. I have flown over the large Costa Rican banana plantations and watched the spraying of the crop; there can be no question as to whose is superior. Meanwhile, Puerto Rican wages are four times those in Mexico, and the country remains an agreeable place in which to live, indeed to thrive, when compared with its neighbors. Spanish Harlem loses its attraction, even as a staging-point for immigrants, particularly when the same American welfare benefits can be obtained on the island itself. It is well-known that only one percent of Puerto Rico's population voted for independence.

Apart from spouting the customary Castroite rhetoric, this element has argued that the island's success is due to a section of the U. S. tax code known as 936, which offered incentives in the form of tax credits to U. S. companies locating on the island, especially in electronics, pharmaceuticals, and the like. Sure it did. Why? Because 936 companies identified a skilled and diligent work force before sinking their money into this "poorhouse of the Caribbean," a once joke-country that is now the Singapore of the region. Puerto Rico's GNP has soared from $3.7 billion in 1950 to more than $20 billion today.

Of course, the average vacationer will care little for statistics, heading for Condado's fleshy beaches and the mile-long resorts built along them. Such are perhaps a trifle depressingly reminiscent of Miami Beach or Fort Lauderdale. Vast marshmallow skyscrapers run into each other like mammoth dice. Still, they supply the world's weary, and their young, with the backdrop they want, and one cannot say them nay. Plus it is easy to close eyes and ears to the raucous rock music and overfed bodies grilling under the pitiless sun and hie on past to the splendid Morro fortress, nemesis of Drake, where a million-dollar restorative project has preserved the last of the 18th century—churches, belfries, cobbled streets—in the erstwhile capital.

This section of San Juan has great charm, with its wrought-iron miradors and gingerbread balconies, which are presided over by potted plants and wary cats. I stayed at the gracious El Convento Hotel, a converted convent beside the cathedral and overlooking a leafy square. This is no mere hostelry; the installation has preserved all the original decorative elements (stained-glass windows, chandeliers, rustic tiles, and goatskin lamps) and was carried out entirely by indigenous architects respectful of the continuity of the site's religious past.

This old center may be small but it is larger than similar architectural relics of its kind in South America, all succumbing to the depradations of high-rise office buildings; Salvador da Bahia in Brazil is a case in point. But if the renovations of Old San Juan have been accomplished with taste under the auspices of the island's Institute of Culture, the folkloric artifacts sold in the luxury stores crowding these cobbled streets—acres of gold jewelry on offer here—lack in comparison with the architecture. The authenticity of the latter is conspicuously degraded by the crudity of dolls, figurines, plates, bowls, and general gimcrackery of a vulgarity that makes sad contrast with the lingering tradition of ceramic tiles, wooden stairway risers, and courtyard gardens.

In this respect I fear that tourism, even high tourism, has a deadening effect; art has to be made out of affection or fun, not simply to satisfy what are conceived to be the desires of a tourist market. Time and again I have returned to sources of charming folkloric art in South America only to find them vanished or degraded.

Finally, it remains to be seen what route Puerto Rico and its new governor will take in the coming months. Will the country be content to keep its current commonwealth status or will it decide to become another state? The former relationship confers on its citizenry virtually all the benefits of full American citizenship, but educated opinion on the island seems resigned to a symbolic vote for statehood. In this case Puerto Rico would have more representatives in Congress than the whole of New York State, a sobering consideration (apart from that of taxation). For it is unlikely that such servants of the public would read this Hispanic success story of the past half-century for what it says between the lines: namely, that a people who are not treated as second-class citizens, or coddled by affirmative actions and condescended to by Uncle Sam's subsidies as victims perpetually reminded of past injustices, can do very well on their own, thank you.

Geoffrey Wagner, author of some 30 suspense fictions, lives in retirement in Grenada.

Letter FromUtah

by William Grigg

The Execution of St. William

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Through the mysterious alchemy of "social justice," criminals become martyr-saints. Habitual criminal Rodney King is now spoken of in the same pious tone once reserved for icons like plagiarist/philanderer Martin Luther King, Jr. William Andrews, who was executed last year by the state of Utah for his role in the 1974 torture-slayings of three people, has now joined the leftist pantheon.

Nineteen years ago, William Andrews and Pierre Dale Selby were airmen stationed at the Hill Air Force Base near Ogden, Utah. Selby had a reputation for violence; Andrews' military record depicts him as a compulsive troublemaker who was well on his way to a dishonorable discharge. One evening in 1974, Andrews and Selby broke into a hi-fi shop in Ogden. In the course of a four-hour robbery—inspired, in part, by the need to appease drug habits—Andrews and Selby tortured five people, three of whom died.

The burglars brought an arsenal that included two handguns and a supply of Drano. The handguns were to be used to conduct the robbery, but the Drano was to be used as a murder weapon. Andrews poured caustic cocktails that were forced down the throats of his victims. The victims' mouths were taped shut, apparently to prevent them from expelling the poison.

After administering the Drano Andrews left the hi-fi store, apparently to act as a lookout. While Andrews was gone, Selby raped one of the victims and kicked a ballpoint pen deep into the ear of another. Selby then shot the latter

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in the head with Andrews' .38. He thus made an individual decision to accelerate the murder objective mutually agreed upon with Andrews. While two of the victims were saved, examinations later confirmed that all of them would have died from poisoning had they been left unattended.

Both Andrews and Selby were black. Accordingly, the all-white jury at the 1974 "Hi-Fi Murder" trial became an issue, as did the fact that prospective juror James Gillespie, Jr., a black man, was dismissed by the prosecutor in a peremptory challenge. But it was the *defense* that first sought to dismiss Mr. Gillespie, because he was a law enforcement officer (and thus considered prejudiced in favor of testimony from other law enforcement officers). When the judge refused to grant the defense's motion, the prosecution asked for Gillespie's dismissal in order to deny a possible basis for an appeal. Prior to Andrews' death, Gillespie publicly *supported* the sentence and insisted that the 1974 trial was untainted by racism. Ironically, it was Gillespie—who now works as director of field communications for the Utah Department of Corrections—who delivered the official announcement of Andrews' execution.

Selby was executed in 1987, provoking predictable protests from opponents of capital punishment. Many objected to the "racist" application of the death penalty: several white murderers in Utah are serving life sentences, rather than anticipating execution on death row. As Andrews' execution approached, the "social justice" industry began to protest that he was merely an accomplice to the lethal crime and thus not properly a murderer.

In the final weeks before Andrews' execution, his supporters depicted him as a quiet, modest young man who had been helplessly drawn into Selby's orbit. But both his military and prison records belie such a description. Andrews' role in the murders had been well-established at the trial; the procedural questions related to the trial had been examined in six separate appeals to the Supreme Court. Interviews with Selby and Andrews conducted by social workers had provided evidence that it was Andrews, not Selby, who took the initiative in planning the crime.

There was no reason to believe that Andrews had been "rehabilitated" during his 18-year tenancy on death row. His personal record at the Utah state prison is replete with escape attempts, arson attempts, threats of sexual assault, and acts of physical assault. On one occasion, for example, Andrews somehow constructed a spear, which he threw at a prison guard.

In an execution-eve interview on local public television, Andrews complained that "I haven't had a chance to enjoy the more beautiful things in life. I've never seen the ocean, I've never seen the Grand Canyon. There are so many good people in the world I never got a chance to meet." (He met a few in the hi-fi store one evening, with fatal consequences for them.) He uttered not one syllable of remorse for his acts nor regret toward the surviving victims.

The contention that Utah's death penalty is racist in application is difficult to sustain. Of the 47 murderers executed by the state of Utah before Andrews, 41 were white; the remainder of the total was divided evenly among blacks, Hispanics, and American Indians. This allotment is representative of the state's racial composition.

Nevertheless, career leftists and racebaiters besieged the state. Amnesty International orchestrated an international letter-writing campaign on Andrews' behalf; letters from around the globe were delivered to Utah Governor Norman Bangerter and published in Utah papers. Television actor Mike Farrell (B. J. Hunnicutt of *M*A*S*H*) was brought to the state in an attempt to win clemency from the governor. In a speech to Andrews supporters, black activist Ron Hampton declared, "We have reason to believe Utah can be classified among the states in the Bible Belt that live and practice racism." (Hampton's logic is as reliable as his geography.) The Utah chapter of the NAACP announced that "the color of justice in Utah is white" and conducted a nightly vigil outside the governor's mansion. Two other black organizations filed an appeal before Third District Judge Anne Stirba. Attorney Victor Gordon, who represented the organizations, announced that "this execution signals the end to the hopes that racism and discrimination will end, and will signify . . . the arrival of repression, and will build the foundation for Apartheid in Utah." In keeping with the South Africa parallel, Desmond Tutu called the Utah NAACP to express support for Andrews.

In a final testament delivered hours before his July 30 execution, Andrews thanked his supporters for their efforts and urged them to "continue the fight for social justice after I'm gone." He also expressed the hope that "maybe a lot of white people will learn that black people have the same emotions, same loves, and same hates as they do."

Black "leaders" in Utah saw nothing amiss in designating Andrews a symbol of the "black community." But at a memorial service Steven Hawkins of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund elevated Andrews beyond the status of martyr: he compared him to Jesus Christ, insisting that Andrews was "innocent and unjustly accused . . . a man whose life has changed us all and made the world a better place. . . . He has made the ultimate contribution to our struggle."

The Utah NAACP has taken strength from Andrews' "sacrifice." It has even organized a "William Andrews Committee for Equal Justice," a group that intends to tabulate incidents of individual and "institutional" racism, monitor court proceedings, and "educate Utahans about racism." The William Andrews Committee will be assisted in this effort by the Utah Martin Luther King Human Rights Commission, which was established by Republican Governor Norman Bangerter's executive order in August 1991. One state legislator who serves on the commission has said that informal contacts between the two groups had been made before Andrews' execution.

The state Human Rights Commission has since beatified another criminal. Last August, 18-year-old Stevie Manzanares was shot while attempting robbery. Because Manzanares is Hispanic, many elements of Utah's "social justice" industry—including the Socialist Workers' Party and members of the Human Rights Commission—have classified the shooting a racial incident. A coalition of career malcontents organized a protest march on Manzanares' behalf in Salt Lake City last August 29. Among the speakers at the protest was Jeanette Williams, a vice-president of the Utah NAACP and a member of the William Andrews Committee. She added Manzanares' name to the martyrs' roster: "Every time they hear Stevie's name, they'll know we are fighting the injustices here in the state of Utah."

The Human Rights Commission has few misgivings about Manzanares' worthiness as a hero. When I mentioned

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the young man's attempted robbery to a legislator who serves on the commission, I was told, "If he [Manzanares] was an Anglo, the police wouldn't have pulled their guns so quickly." The Human Rights Commission is obviously too busy auditing racial attitudes to take notice of the human rights abuses wrought by thieves and murderers.

William Grigg is a columnist for the Daily Herald *in Provo, Utah.*

Letter From the Lower Right

by John Shelton Reed

Capture the Flag, Part I

◆

In an earlier letter I cheered my buddy Chris's suggestion that announcements at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics be given in both Southern and Yankee English but pointed out that on preliminary form Atlanta's civic leaders are unlikely to cotton to the idea. I didn't mention another of Chris's proposals, one they're guaranteed to like even less: he wants to fly the Stars and Bars at the Games. My first impulse is to unleash a rebel yell for that proposition, too, but let's think about it a bit before we write Maynard Jackson.

Chris observes that the Catalans got to fly their flag in Barcelona, and personally I like the idea of the South as a sort of American Catalonia. But we have a problem that the Catalans don't. Unlike their historic symbols, which are signs of national unity, ours are mostly the symbols of the Confederacy, which these days signify and inspire mostly discord.

Witness the fact that many of Georgia's and virtually all of Atlanta's political bigshots are now campaigning to end what the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* calls the "disgrace" of including the Confederate battle flag as part of the Georgia state flag. Far from wanting to fly the rebel flag at the Olympics, these folks want it completely out of sight before the television cameras come to the City Too Busy to Hate and beam it out worldwide. The *Journal-Constitution*'s editorial cartoonist even did a scurrilous little number juxtaposing the Nazi flag flying over the 1936 Olympics and the Southern Cross waving over the 1996 Games. (The cartoonist, a young man from Seattle, claims he got some death threats, but not nearly enough to suit me.)

All the arguments for and against changing have been aired at length in the Georgia press, and they even spilled over to the editorial page of *USA Today*, which gratuitously urged Georgia to rejoin the Union, then printed the predictable letters. Most of the pros and cons you can probably reconstruct for yourself, and I won't rehash them here. If you have trouble seeing the case for keeping things as they are, write a group called Northeast Georgians for the Flag and Southern Heritage and ask for a copy of their brochure (Box 2731, Athens, Georgia 30612—send them a buck or two to cover expenses). The anti-flag arguments are pretty obvious, I should think; we've heard them in a dozen other disputes.

One complication in the Georgia case, however, is that the present flag was adopted only in 1956—to symbolize resistance to desegregation, its opponents claim. Its defenders find in the record of the legislative deliberations no signs of that motive and a good many indications that the point was to honor the Confederacy in light of the upcoming Civil War centennial. Those who object to honoring the Confederacy, of course, don't see that as an improvement.

Another factor that gives the Georgia dispute a special twist is the nature of Atlanta. The Peach State's capital is the kind of place where you get off an airplane and confront a sign that says "Welcome to Atlanta: A World-Class, Major-League City." (I mean, really: try substituting London or Tokyo or even Los Angeles or Budapest in that line to see how pitiful it is.) When Atlanta's Convention and Visitors Bureau recently hired McCann-Erikson to devise a slogan for the place, the best the Mad. Ave. boys could come up with was the insipid "Atlanta: Hometown to the World." (My buddy Martin did better off the top of his head with "Atlanta: The South Stops Here.") Anyway, a town this insecure doesn't want to emphasize its true, provincial identity or the ambiguity of its history.

Nevertheless, it seems that most white Georgians don't share their betters' distaste for the flag of their ancestors. A Mason-Dixon poll last July, for instance, showed that 66 percent of all white Georgians—even 61 percent of all white Atlantans—wanted to keep the present flag and that only 29 percent wanted to scrap it. Not even many black Georgians dislike it, if we can believe the polls: fully 59 percent of them want to retain the current flag. Given this, and the fact that Atlanta still doesn't muster a majority in the Georgia legislature, the political handicappers I've talked to predict that the flag will be retained. But one Atlanta pol told me at supper one night that he and his friends will simply not fly the state flag, if they can't get it changed back to what it was before 1956. (He didn't know, of course, and apparently hardly anyone else does either, that the old Georgia flag is actually the Stars and Bars, the Confederate national flag proper, with the state seal—and motto, "Wisdom, justice, moderation"—substituted for the stars. It was adopted in 1879 with the restoration of home rule after Reconstruction.)

Anyway, when these conflicts arise, my first reaction—and surely that of many sensible people—is always to wonder whether our politicians and journalists don't have something better to do. After all, it's not as if Alabama and Georgia and North Carolina don't have some real problems, even a few real problems of race relations. I feel like "Soapy Sam" Wilberforce, 19th-century bishop of Oxford, confronted with a bitter controversy over whether priests could wear chasubles. "What a plague it is," His Lordship complained, "that people cannot have common sense as well as earnestness."

But like the chasuble question, this *is* important, if not in itself, at least in the matter of what it stands for. The Confederate flag is as offensive to some of our fellow citizens as Romish vestments were to some of Wilberforce's, and in many of the same ways. Like their Victorian counterparts, our latter-day Roundheads see scraps of colored cloth as representing doctrines they find repugnant, doctrines once thought to have been extirpated for all time. Those of a more Whiggish disposition—like Atlanta's leaders—see the flag as an emblem of opposition to progress and

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enlightenment. The flag's partisans, meanwhile, refuse to accept their adversaries' definition of what it is they are defending. And, God knows, everybody is earnest.

Can we sort this out? Is there anything helpful to be said, or must this all just come down to a political contest of wills?

First of all, let's stipulate that it's nobody's business but Georgians' *what* goes on their flag. *USA Today* may not have the sense to stay out of this affair, but Southerners, at least, should recognize that states' rights is one thing the Southern Cross stands for, and if a state can't even choose its own flag . . . well, maybe it's time to rethink secession. But on the larger question of what an appropriate symbol of Southern unity might be, I do feel entitled to some opinions, and in fact I have two: that the South needs and deserves *some* sort of symbols and that the Confederate flag won't do anymore.

Let me tell a story. Some time back a friend sent me an issue of the *Jaguar Journal*, a student publication of the Falls Church, Virginia, high school. It contains a rather lame attack on the Confederate flag as a symbol of slavery and oppression, paired with an eloquent defense by a young woman named Wendi Crouch, who quotes the country-music group Alabama: "And we were leaning, leaning on / The everlasting arms of love, / Livin' all the simple joys / This Dixie boy is made of." A survey revealed that nearly half of the school's multiracial, multicultural student body felt that things are just fine as they are; as one student put it, the flag is a "symbol of everything the South stands for: unity and pride." Another third felt that it shouldn't be flown officially (for instance, over state capitals). Only one student in six felt that display of the flag should be banned altogether.

Now, I've said many snide things (some of them in this magazine) about northern, or "Occupied," Virginia: maybe I've been too harsh. But notice that the students' defense of the flag was not on the grounds of its association with the Confederacy. Those who spoke for the record valued it simply as an emblem of Southern pride *in the present*.

But that pride is considerable. At the William and Mary commencement a couple of years ago a student speaker shared with the audience what his father had told him as he began his freshman year: "Remember what you come from," his daddy had said. "You're a Virginian and a Southerner." (My informant was reminded of his own father's parting words, 30 years ago: "Well, son, you'll meet all kinds up here.") Southerners feel themselves to be citizens of no mean city, and if the Confederate flag is the only symbol of our community available, we'll use it—one reason many who don't care much about the Confederacy one way or the other are attached to its flag.

Regret it or not, however, it's simply a fact that fewer self-identified Southerners each year feel any attachment to the Confederate heritage. In the first place, an increasing proportion of native whites either don't know or don't care what their ancestors' sympathies were. Thirty-seven percent of the white respondents to a 1992 Southern Focus Poll didn't know whether they had family who fought in the Late Unpleasantness, and another 30 percent said they knew they didn't. Of the remaining third, one in six had only Union ancestors and a quarter had kinfolk on both sides. (Both ignorance and mixed ancestry are more common among younger Southerners than among older ones.) In other words, something under 20 percent of today's white Southerners have an exclusively Confederate heritage, and know it.

In addition, fewer and fewer self-identified Southerners are native whites to begin with. Both Asian- and Hispanic-Southerners are more common each year: I know some of each. A good many migrants from Yankeedom are quite ready to sign up, if we'll let them. And surveys show that most Southern blacks now identify themselves as Southerners—a welcome development, in my view. But you can't expect most of these folks to be fond of the Confederate flag. In particular, the flag divides Southerners on racial lines. Asked by the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* whether the flag is more a symbol of racial conflict or of Southern pride, Southern whites picked regional pride 76 to 17 percent, while blacks saw racial conflict 58 to 31 percent. (Blacks were far more tolerant of the song *Dixie*, seeing it as a symbol of Southern pride by a margin of 48 percent to 40 percent.)

Given all this, it seems to me that making all "true Southerners" salute the Confederate flag excludes altogether too many people who have a right to the label, and who could be valuable recruits to the cause. On grounds of both prudence and doing the right thing, there's much to be said for finding or devising other symbols of regional identity, more inclusive ones that can be saluted by anyone of good will. Here we can learn from the Catalans. In their view anyone who moves to their region and adopts their ways (in particular, their language) is Catalan, period. This means they don't face the problem that Southerners now face, that of being a minority in much of their own land. Migration to Catalonia contributes to the nation's economic and political strength, offsetting its relatively low birthrate without undermining its unity.

If we give up pretending that the Confederate flag has a claim on the loyalty of all Southerners—well, then, of course state governments ought to take it off their flags. (I'm not wild about some of the company that conclusion puts me in, but it seems inescapable.) Let those who honor the Confederate heritage do so privately.

But let's not go overboard. The symbols of the Confederacy shouldn't be denied to those who are entitled to them and moved by them. Sixty-odd years ago, Allen Tate complained about "well-meaning orators" who told white Southerners "they need not be ashamed of a grandfather who fought with Lee, that the grandfather could not have known how God had to use four years of war to show them the righteousness of Big Business and the iniquity of the farm." But more has changed since 1930 than the *New Republic* (in which Tate wrote): I can't recall the last time I heard someone telling white Southerners that. Indeed, those whose grandfathers fought with Lee must often feel these days that they *are* being asked to apologize for their heritage, if not to renounce it altogether. As the Marxist historian Eugene Genovese, characteristically gallant, observed during an exchange on this subject at a recent meeting of the American Studies Association, no one should be required to spit on his ancestors' graves. We should all wish the latter-day Confederates luck in rescuing their symbols from the racist trash who have lately sought to appropriate them.

More on these matters next month.

John Shelton Reed writes from Chapel Hill, North Carolina, and hates to be called a "moderate."

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Letter From Pennsylvania

by James J. Novak

The Pilgrims' Progress

If there is one constant at yard sales, estate auctions, and second-hand bookstores in this state, it is the presence of old books, Bibles, classics, and diverse texts that once made splashes before sinking into obscurity. Perhaps the most frequently seen volume, after the Bible, is John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, a book that, again, was second only to the Bible in most American homes up to the end of the 19th century and, in some homes, albeit mostly rural ones, well into the 20th century. Indeed, its ubiquitous presence throughout most of our young nation's history may well account for the stability of American political life. For *Pilgrim's Progress* is the most un-utopian book imaginable: a testament that, in this world of the City of Destruction and Vanity Fair, there is no hope at all short of the Celestial City. My rekindled interest in Bunyan was stimulated by two recent events that made me contemplate the importance of this 17th-century man. The first was the Grange Fair, the annual county festival in our neck of the woods. It is held in August, usually a dry and golden period of high temperatures and low humidity, just after the summer haying and before the corn harvest. The Centre County Grange Fair, according to its sponsors, is the last of the nation's tenting fairs, where area farmers and their families pitch and live for a week in large tents, today built on concrete slabs at the Grange Fairgrounds in the village of Centre Hall. The tents are half-walled ones, the kind that used to be standard Boy Scout issue, the type that in my youth housed Methodists who went to "camp" once a year in a nearby forest. Back in the old days, when a trip to the county fair by horse-and-wagon could take up to two days, "tenting" was a necessity. Today it's a relic, albeit a vital one.

For while our county fair has its share of carnival activities—ferris wheels, games, food vendors, and country and gospel singers, designed, I suppose, to enliven the atmosphere and brighten the tan-and-green world of crops and ploughed earth us rubes live in—the heart of the fair consists of the tents and the awarding of prizes for animals, crops, canning, and crafts. Indeed, the essence of the fair is serious business: judging the best steer, the fluffiest rabbit, the biggest pumpkin, the finest quilt.

The tents, in even rows along well delineated and named streets, are the social fair's heart. Here are found descendants of most of the area's original settlers, families whose recorded roots trace to the end of the 18th century, when our local valleys were settled. These are the farming families that moved here from Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, and Germany to plough the fertile limestone-based fields. Like the land they till, each tenting place at the Grange Fair is inherited from one generation to the next. There's no doubt who your neighbors will be next year. The tents' inhabitants represent intertwining family trees—grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins, in-laws—as well as an endless stream of anecdotes that comprise the county's verbal history, replete with family alliances and clan feuds. The fair is a time for Centre County's old families to gather and to make their statement of roots simply by possessing their inherited tenting places. But the Grange Fair is only the culmination of their togetherness. For all summer long these clans have held their annual picnics, wherein relatives from near and far flock to one farmstead or another to eat, frolic, and remember their common ancestors.

As a newcomer to the county, having lived here only 17 years, and as a genuine Ellis Island descendant, I find the tents and their inhabitants fascinating. For around those family tables, conversations contain echoes of those who fought in the Revolution, who made the Civil War, who participated in every stage of our nation's history. Even when not consciously trying to do so, these families express values that hark back to early America. Think of the tangible reminders many of those tenting families retain: old rifles, uniforms, Bibles, books, and, in many cases, barns that date to that long bygone era. It is these tenting families that are the old Americans of John Bunyan's tale, the rural Scotch-Irish and German farmers who put America on the Straight and Narrow Path and have prevented us from descending into the mire and the hot ashes. It is these families, by their dogged devotion to tradition, that are the backbone of America. For they continue honing the values that keep us going.

This is not to imply that these tenting families are, or ever were, straight and narrow pilgrims on their way to the Celestial City. Like everyone else, they are caught up in the snares of Mr. Worldly Wiseman, Mr. Ignorance, Mr. Formalistic, and Mr. Hypocrisy. They are ordinary rural Americans who act and dress like rural Americans, in baseball caps, blue jeans, and tank-top shirts. Their women wear cotton print dresses or, if young, blue jeans or shorts. Their tents are neat, if often filled with tacky couches and old TVs. They are not so much the "raise-hell-Saturday-night-and-go-to-church-Sunday" kind of Christians as Christians like Bunyan's hero: people who carry a big load, have tried to be good but have fallen into the Slough of Despond, have seen the man in the iron mask, have known the Doubting Castle and a fear of its dungeon, have wandered down the Easy Path instead of the Straight and Narrow, and have lived in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. Having grown up with people like them (indeed, my natural speaking accent is mountain Allegheny ridge), and having served with them in the Army, it is not hard for me to attest that they are the salt of the earth, the American earth, the hard-scrabble Americans of the Appalachian Ridge who form the most reliable reservoir of fighting men and women that any nation has ever bred. They are the kind of neighbors that make me certain of what "we Americans" means.

In a way, you best can understand them by viewing their work at the Grange Fair. In the cow barns, the milk cows are clean and combed and the stalls are mucked and filled with fresh straw; at the show barn, the judge not only chooses the best "light heavyweight" Angus steers but explains, in an agriculture professor's twang, why each steer was judged as it was. Among the milk goats, young men trim excess hair from the backs of restive charges and pre-teenagers lather and gently shave the ears of patient goat-pets, "redding" them for the judging. In the swine barns, blue, red, and white ribbons already have been handed out and hang above the stalls—stalls, not styes. And in the stalls are found the cleanest, best trimmed, most combed pigs ever seen

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in all creation. The cleanliness of the barns and stalls, the grooming of the prize pigs, goats, and sheep is so meticulous that you know that only in America are there such exhibits, such severely clean livestock and housing. Having seen similar exhibits in Germany, Holland, and Ireland, I can attest that America's livestock facilities are the best.

My first experience with fairs was 90 miles away from Centre Hall, at the Indiana County Fair where my father used to volunteer in the office during and after World War II, when men were scarce and city folks helped keep the fair going in the soldiers' absence. My job was to help a Mrs. Sandford clean the stall for her cows and steers, animals, by the way, that she had brought to town tied to a flatbed wagon towed by two large-hoofed work horses because she didn't have gasoline ration-tickets to fuel the truck. She was a severe woman around the barn, demanding spic-and-span work, but a lovely lady who, in gratitude, bought me cotton candy and candied apples. That's when I learned how hard the 4-H kids work to groom their cows, ones named Millie, Honeysuckle, Miss America, or just plain Missy; how nightly the farm kids go out to feed, wash, and talk to their charges; how they worry about their feed and health and how a bond develops between the human and the animal as they prepare for the fair, where they hope to win a blue ribbon. There is no joy in the world more honestly unselfish than that of a youngster who sees his or her pig or cow win a prize, who beams when a beloved Honeysuckle beats out that ugly Missy—even though they're both simply registered Holsteins from the same sire.

This is the world of Bunyan's pilgrims in America, however unlikely it is that today's kids, who live in regional or consolidated school districts, have even heard of Bunyan, his hero Christian, or Christian's friends Faithful and Hopeful. Likely as not, their pastors sermonize on social and political issues more than on the virtues of chastity and sobriety. Yet Bunyan's pilgrims retain that straight and narrow drive to run a good fair, to compete straight up with real standards, to want the best to win. There's no affirmative action for pigs at the Grange Fair.

It was the fair that sparked the memory of my father that, in turn, made me recall Bunyan. For while my father was a die-hard Roman Catholic, he worshipped, as did my immigrant grandparents, all things American. And to my father, that meant John Marquand's Protestant America, the America of hard work and reward, of character, not pleasant personalities. He always emphasized that immigrants to America had to forgo old country ways in order to become something new, to be American. To help accomplish this, we were required to learn the complete American canon, partly by reading the American classics of Hawthorne, Cooper, Melville, Twain, and others and by being able to recite, in the best declamatory style, Washington's Farewell and Lincoln's Gettysburg Address and Second Inaugural speech. Finally, we had to read *Pilgrim's Progress*, which he said was the most common book he saw in the farmhouses he visited as an insurance salesman.

When my father passed away recently, I liberated his copy of Bunyan, imprinted with his library seal on the inside cover. As a child, he had been given the book by a minister for whom his widowed mother worked as a domestic. He kept that copy, even rescuing it from the waters of the infamous 1936 flood; it retains the water marks. In any case, my curiosity peaked by the Grange Fair, I reread *Pilgrim's Progress*.

Its message hit me more powerfully today, at age 53, than it had 40-odd years ago—no doubt because I've learned the hard way about the Straight-and-Narrow, the pitfalls in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and the terrors of the Slough of Despond. Only this time the suspense arose not from worrying about the fate of Christian the Pilgrim, but from an attempt to measure myself against the Worldly Wiseman and Ignorance, Bunyan's examples that came far too close to home. Indeed, it upset me to see how far down the Easy Path I had wandered; how dull my perception had become about what was essential, by having given myself overmuch to the wiles of Vanity Fair, where Christian's friend Faithful was martyred; and how few friends I had, like Hopeful, to engage in Christian discourse with in the Valley of the Shadow of Death. The story had changed so that I, not Bunyan, was the Pilgrim, and the load now rested on my shoulders.

The other thing that struck me from the vantage point of experience was that while the Celestial City's glory was beautiful and desirable, it no longer was a utopia, but a reality we all seem to nurse in our psychic bosom. Following Christian as he approached the Celestial City, he seemed to walk far ahead; I thought I'd never catch up, that I was caught in the snares and would never join him. And though I didn't fall on my knees in utter penitence, the book left me with two clear messages: that I had been asleep and Bunyan woke me and that I knew what to do. Henceforth, my effort to enter the narrow gate would be more purposeful, more directly effective. I felt that Protestant awakeness that characterizes the Founding Fathers' writings and Civil War reports, the awakeness that inspired John Milton and Hawthorne. It is a Protestant tension that underlies the Declaration of Independence, infusing it with a limpid clarity that informs each thought and phrase.

It is this tradition that lives on in a sleeping way in the severe cleanliness of the Grange Fair barns and in the dogged tradition of the tents, though in our era, unlike that of our ancestors, fairgoers can quickly drive home. I have no doubt that the values of *Pilgrim's Progress* live on in the bosoms of my county neighbors, among whom, if there is ever an awakening, I'm sure we'll find the progeny of Christian, Faithful, and Hopeful. It is this presence of the Pilgrim's influence that made me comprehend Robert Frost's statement, "But I have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep." Exactly the way *Pilgrim's Progress* affected me: miles to go and so little time.

In movies, county fairs end up in stories of love and sex, instead of depicting more visually vivid messages like that of *Pilgrim's Progress*. But then movies are meant to lull viewers to sleep, not to wake them up. So those of us who want to be awakened will have to forgo movies and attend the fairs, in order to see the reality more clearly, to escape from the couch and the plastic reality pedalled by the cultural elite of the moment. America remains just outside our door, if we have the desire and energy to seek it and enough open-mindedness to understand what we see. We must leave Vanity Fair behind to reach the real spirit of America, which I figure has more to do with Bunyan than with all the movies ever made.

James J. Novak is a writer who divides his time between Florida and New York.

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FILM

Anna Myers Wodecki

Biggies

by David R. Slavitt

Bram Stoker's Dracula
Produced by Francis Ford Coppola, Fred Fuchs, and Charles Mulvehill
Written by James V. Hart
Directed by Francis Ford Coppola
Distributed by Columbia Pictures

A Few Good Men
Produced by David Brown, Rob Reiner, and Andrew Scheinman
Written by Aaron Sorkin
Directed by Rob Reiner
Distributed by Columbia Pictures

There are advantages to doing these movie pieces at a leisurely (bimonthly) pace, prime among which is that I don't have to go to too many movies. What got to me the last time around, when I was working for a weekly magazine, was that I was getting up, dressing, shaving, and going into New York . . . to see *Beach Blanket Bingo* or some such thing, and, worse than that, that I was rather liking it, seeing new and richer aspects of Annette Funicello's performance. I am older now, more self-protective, perhaps lazier, and I contrive to avoid such psychic stress.

But aside from that obvious benefit, there is the further lagniappe that the mere passage of time can sometimes offer. A film opens, and there is a critical consensus—as with *Dracula* for instance. Mostly the critics didn't like it, or didn't like Coppola because they felt intimidated by him. (How else to protect the calibration of the delicate critical instrument against the rough embraces of the man whom most of us would have to admit is the greatest living American filmmaker?) So they dumped on his movie and talked about how long it seems, how excessive, how over-the-top—and how disappointed they were. Indeed, there is such niggardliness to the ordinarily fulsome slatherings of hyperbolic praise that the advertisements in the national newspapers had to resort to a blurb from Eleanor O'Sullivan of the *Asbury Park Press* ("A hip, scary, sexy ride"), which stratagem is a generally reliable indication of disaster. It was only when I read last December in the *New York Times* a Frank Rich "think piece" about how the film was actually about AIDS that I was reminded how dumb these reviewers can be. I had assumed that it would be about AIDS, couldn't imagine anyone making such a movie—about blood, sex, guilt, and Christ—without some such novel suggestion. I was not supposing that Coppola would be making any particular social or political point, but just that he would be tapping into the energy that comes of the fears the new plague has occasioned. This is not a story that has been sitting around on some shelf waiting to be told, after all. What other prompting could there have been for someone like Coppola to redo this material?

I thought the picture was just fine, a superior piece of work that seems only richer in retrospect. Coppola is clearly having fun, taking the architecture of the original material in Stoker's novel and the numerous film versions of the story—many of them remarkable examples of excellent movie-making in styles ranging from more or less straight, through various degrees of expressionism, up to and including sheer and exuberant camp. Coppola exploits these stylistic choices with great zest, and one sees echoes here not only of F. W. Murnau, who made the 1922 *Nosferatu*, or of Tod Browning, who did *Dracula* in 1930, or of Werner Herzog, who made a *Nosferatu* in 1979, but also of Ken Russell (*The Devils*) and William Friedkin (in his *Exorcist* mode). The film also contains sequences that are unmistakable reprises of Akira Kurosawa's battlefield tableaux and even, in one elaborate wedding scene, a cheerful piece of self-referential allusion to *The Godfather*.

The tone of the film is extravagant, complicated, and excessive, and the comments I have heard and read about how the pace is too slow just don't make any sense to me whatever. We are expected, after all, to know the story. We are hardly on tenterhooks about what the mysterious Count has in mind, or what Lucy and Mina are going to do, or even how it will all come out. The text is established and we are interested primarily in the riffs and descants Coppola brings to it. What can he add beyond impressive, effective, and expensive special effects (by Roman Coppola) that would be interesting, shocking, appealing, or would expand and extend the material as we already know it?

The claim of the title—that this is *Bram Stoker's Dracula*—is not that this is closer to the 96-year-old novel than other versions but, on the contrary, that Stoker had seen through to possibilities of fear that no one could have reasonably anticipated in 1897. The novel's underlying equations of sex and blood and death were clever enough back then. But the AIDS epidemic has turned the generalized ambivalent charge of these subjects into a specific and powerful series of suggestions which may be politically incorrect but which none of us can altogether avoid entertaining. The notion inevitably arises that if Dracula is the anti-Christ, and if the crucifix and the Church are enemies of vampirism, then, in a contrary way, sexual experimentation carries an obvious blood risk that is likely to destroy not only the experimenter but those with whom he or she is sexually intimate. It is true for Dracula and his vampires, and it is true and more pointedly frightening for us today. Dr. Van Helsing (Anthony Hopkins plays the pioneer of hematology pretty much the way he played the maniac of *Silence of the Lambs*—and it works just as well) remarks that civilization and syphilisa-

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tion are not unrelated phenomena. He shows us a microscopic view of red blood cells—perfectly normal red cells, my hematologist wife assures me—and we are worried in a way that would have delighted Stoker and that he would certainly have exploited. What Coppola is faithful to is not the text of the novel but its subtext. We become sophisticated and are proud of ourselves for having done so, but we have to acknowledge that we have lost our primitive faith and feel we have been diminished from time past when we were purer and more devout. We are vulnerable now, less well protected for all our social and scientific progress, and we ought not be surprised if the taint of some ancient sin comes back to haunt us.

Stoker and Freud were working through the same kinds of mythic material at almost exactly the same time, although in rather different ways. Their conclusions allow for interesting harmonizations, and these harmonics are what Coppola and his screenwriter, James V. Hart, are celebrating. The perceived "pace" of the film, then, depends on the pace of the viewer's thinking. If no thoughts are going on in your head while you watch the images on the screen, then it may seem draggy—but that's altogether your fault.

In the politics of the picture lies a very careful balancing act. On the one hand, Count Dracula is not a nice fellow. We must disapprove of those who run around causing the kinds of general mayhem and suffering that he inflicts upon all but the very luckiest of those who cross his path. On the other hand, there is his bizarre love story, the fact that he is searching for the lovely Elisabeta, who threw herself off a parapet of his castle some 400 years ago and from whose loss the poor count has never recovered. All the world loves a lover, and we can't wholly dismiss his passion and his (after a fashion) fidelity. His rebellion against the Church's condemnation of his dead wife as a suicide and therefore a damned soul is Coppola's novelty, as is the peculiarly happy ending when the count and his countess are reunited in an apotheosis that is not theological but purely aesthetic—they appear together, after a quite handsome Liebestod, overhead in the Tintoretto-like ceiling painting with which the movie concludes. They are no longer undead (which is loathsome) but transmogrified into art and therefore, in an acceptable and attractive way, immortal.

So it isn't Dracula that the movie is criticizing, or AIDS, but merely the awfulness of what can happen, the cruelty of things-as-they-are. And that's not likely to engender a lot of controversy. If we have fears of AIDS victims, and if we have a nagging sense that they ought to have behaved differently and would not then have put themselves in harm's way, that isn't Coppola's responsibility—although he and his movie do get the benefit of such not quite respectable thoughts. There is even the poignant moment in which some of the vampire ladies attack an infant, a newborn babe. And the horror of that—which neither Murnau nor Browning brought from the book to the screen—seems perfectly reasonable to us, given what we know is going on in those hospital wards in Newark and the Bronx. The horror on the screen seems altogether appropriate and even necessary, a correct and Senecan approximation of how things are in the world. A fine film, then, and very likely a great film, *Dracula* is surely worth seeing.

So is *A Few Good Men*, Rob Reiner's big Christmas movie based on Aaron Sorkin's recent play and starring Tom Cruise and Demi Moore, with an appearance by Jack Nicholson that is absolutely astonishing. We tend to take Nicholson for granted, perhaps because he does dumb things now and then like the Joker in *Batman* (for which he received something in excess of 50 million dollars, which is perhaps not so dumb). But here, as the tougher-than-nails Colonel Nathan R. Jessep, he has such impact that, in a few scenes, he makes the movie. Tom Cruise is a cocky lawyer, all charm and polish with a glitzy Harvard background, but so wet behind the ears that he has never seen the inside of a courtroom except once when he had his driving license suspended. His maturation, his development from the callowness of a sassy kid to real *Menschlichkeit* would not be interesting unless he had to face some actual danger. Nicholson is the danger, and his smiles are so terrifying that we anticipate with bated breath what it would be like if he should ever scowl. One can't help comparing Nicholson's work here with Bogart's in *The Caine Mutiny*, and it is no minimization of Bogey to say that this is even better.

Here again, we have a court martial, a courtroom drama in which Nicholson comes on at the end to do the star turn. He has a kind of controlled fury, an energy that one sees only rarely on screen and hopes never to encounter in the real world. The consideration of what the limits of a Marine's duty to obey the orders of a superior officer are is efficient enough. The acting of Cruise (doing himself) and Moore (doing a kind of updated Katharine Hepburn priss) is agreeably accomplished and mostly persuasive. Kiefer Sutherland and J. T. Walsh are particularly good in important supporting roles as more or less crazed, gung-ho gyrene officers. But it is Nicholson who shows us what the screen is capable of in conveying personal force and drama. Reiner's efficient direction seems to have been in leaving Nicholson to do what he can do better than anyone else in the world—assenting to cinematographer Robert Richardson's preferences for close-ups that make the most of Nicholson's menace—and in having the confidence not to use too much of this great natural resource.

Finally, although it is not my custom to review trailers for coming attractions, I must say that I saw a particularly engaging teaser for *Groundhog Day* with Bill Murray playing a weatherman who goes to Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania, for the annual February rite and gets stuck there, not only in Punxsutawney but in February 2nd. Each time the alarm goes off at 6 A.M., he is condemned to live through the same day until he gets it right. The conceit seems altogether delicious, Murray seems to be having fun with it, and I look forward to the movie with a pleasant combination of eagerness and trepidation that I invite readers to share.

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ART

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Dollars and Aesthetics

by Timothy Taubes

Substance in the art world is all a matter of illusion and facade. In the maxim of La Rochefoucauld, "To establish oneself in the world one does all one can to seem established there already." This illusion goes far beyond spending money on fancy advertising and lavish exhibitions to creating the appearance of popularity and worth. It entails the manufacturing of artificially high prices for artists' work on the open market. This is achieved through an unspoken collusion between art dealers and auctioneers, which involves bribery and price-fixing. Bribes are hidden behind the guise of commissions, and prices are fixed on the auction floor by several randomly placed "ringers" who bid works up to a predetermined level. Once this is accomplished dealers have a public record with which they can assure buyers of the safety and investment potential of their artists.

Investment potential and fashion gather together in an unholy communion. The investment potential of a work of art, in conjunction with the impetus it receives from invested interests, determines the rate of appreciation of that work of art. This is when fashion and market considerations come to dictate taste. An illustration, with the benefit of hindsight, will clarify this point.

The year is 1950, and you have five hundred dollars to spend on a work of art. You could take a walk along 10th Street in New York City, wander through the studios of an emerging group of abstract painters, and take home a large oil painting. You could also walk into a gallery on Madison Avenue that specializes in painters of the 19th century and take home a fine specimen by an American Impressionist. Or you could cross Madison Avenue to an antique shop and buy an exquisite example of Roman Republican sculpture.

The year is now 1990, and you wish to sell the artwork that has been in your possession for 40 years. You take it to one of the auction houses to have it appraised. If the downtown studio you visited was de Kooning's or Rothko's, you are told that the painting is worth about one million dollars. If the American Impressionist you bought was a well-respected name, like Frederick Frieseke or Robert Reid, it could be worth one hundred thousand dollars. And if you bought an exceptionally fine antiquity whose provenance can be specifically determined, it might be worth ten thousand dollars. What accounts for these significant differences in appreciation and worth?

In 1950, the Abstract Expressionists were still the rebel outsiders. (It was only during the decade of the 1950's that they came into prominence.) The price of their work was at ground level, and they therefore offered the greatest potential for appreciation. The aesthetic justifications for the skyrocketing prices of these paintings would entail lengthy discourse on philosophy, psychology, sociology, history, even anthropology and other subjects. But at bottom is the existential notion that the creative act is value-generating, which is a premature qualification of subjectivity. Philosophical justifications notwithstanding, the work of the Abstract Expressionists would never have appreciated the way it did if the investment potential were not there and if these painters had not come under the wing of a very influential group of people, with a lot of money, who by virtue of their wealth were able to manipulate the art market, media, and promotional apparatus and who were vain enough to believe that they were the architects of culture.

The case of the American Impressionists is different. Many of these painters were successful during their lifetime, particularly between the years of 1890 and 1910. Most of them made the obligatory trip to Paris to see the work of the innovators of their style and when they returned to America were generally looked upon as provincial counterparts to the Europeans. During the first half of the 20th century, while the works and reputations of the European Impressionists and Postimpressionists were ascending, the works of the American Impressionists were gathering in attics. However, after World War II, New York City became the capital of the art world. There was a new emphasis on America and things American, and the American Impressionists were rediscovered. Many of them were recognized for having brought a fresh and novel approach to Impressionism. A few have even rivaled the Europeans in market value. But the achievements or failures of Impressionism notwithstanding, the prices of these paintings would never have escalated had their investment potential not been recognized by dealers and collectors and had they not been available in abundance for speculation.

The 1990's have been labeled the technotronic age of information. Everything is at our command, at the touch of our fingertips. We want our information fast, and we want to comprehend it quickly. The result is a congenital laziness and impatience with things that take time, research, and education. We are becoming a computer-literate society, but we are losing many of our other abilities in the bargain. One of these is the ability to make intelligent judgments about art.

It takes no patience to understand dollar value. It is simple, calculable, and even provides a numerical scale. True aesthetic value takes a great deal of patience to understand. It is unfortunate, but not surprising, that dollar value has come to replace aesthetic value and that behind the high price paid for a work of art is the veiled implication of a correspondingly high aesthetic value.

The art market is now experiencing a terrible slump after the gangbuster decade of the 1980's. This is only partly due to the state of the economy. It is true that in a sour economy luxury items are the first to be cut from discretionary spending, but the root of the problem lies elsewhere.

Dealers are responsible for pumping the art market up beyond the level that the real situation indicates. Auction houses are particularly guilty of this. As long as paintings continued to sell they

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saw no reason to stop the escalation. They steadily raised estimates on paintings, placed high reserves on paintings below which they were not allowed to sell, and started the bidding at high levels. They created an inflated atmosphere in which auctions would contain dozens of paintings estimated at over a million dollars. There simply was not enough money to buy them all. Paintings were priced out of the market, and many went unsold. People who had paid good money just a few years ago could no longer liquidate their "investment." This sent shock waves through the art market, which shook confidence in buying art in general.

The critics are also culpable for their part in creating a helter-skelter "anything goes" aesthetic environment. There is no longer any unified body of aesthetic knowledge to which values can be assigned. Everything and anything cannot qualify as a work of art lest art lose all sense of definition. Critics are busy cultivating their own aesthetic orchards, and no one dares trespass to pluck his neighbor's fruit. This fragmentation of aesthetics leaves no foundation on which to justify the dollar values of the art market, allowing dealers the opportunity to promote anything without discretion. The highly esoteric and obscure nature of contemporary art criticism offers the enticement of entry into a private and privileged club; this is manna for dealer and snob alike. The magazines that disseminate art criticism today are the dealers' trade journals, which depend on advertising dollars, and their purpose is to promote sales. The critics welcome this scenario, indeed look favorably upon works of art attaining astronomical prices.

Ultimately, it is the artists themselves who must assume responsibility for the present state of affairs. They have abnegated their role as propagators of the aesthetic message. The decades of the 1950's and 1960's were the age of the critic. The 1970's and 1980's were the era of the dealer. During these years the "aesthetic ball" was taken away from the artist. Without any sound criteria for value judgment, artists allowed their aesthetic choices to be made for them and were finally left with no choice of their own. Artists today are working naked in a barren wilderness. They have no means of providing for themselves, and their surroundings offer them neither direction nor comfort. This is the symptom of spiritual separation. Artists are groping, hoping to become the next important discovery. Works of art designed to shock the sensibilities are fed into a system that has become anesthetized like an addict in need of a more powerful fix. And like the addict, who at the center of his discontent fails to recognize his own problem, so must the art world reach rock bottom before it can come to its own rescue.

Timothy Taubes is a former director of the Artists' Choice Museum in New York City and author of the forthcoming $$$ and Aesthetics *(Prometheus Books).*

COMMONWEAL

Anna Mycek-Wodecki

Our Lady of *The Price Is Right*

by Stephen Provizer

Let the Buddhists have their mandalas; give the Muslims Mecca; we have *The Price Is Right*. Five days a week at 11:00 A.M., soaring audio and video levels, howling graphics, and dizzying camera shots herald the appearance of a ministry as fervent as any in the world. The names of the chosen few are called out in demographic perfection—a black or two, Latins, perky coeds, Marine sergeants, and Sun Belt retirees. Exhorted to "Come on Down!" they spring from their seats like human Pop-Tarts and race to take their places at the bidding rostrums. Released from purgatory, they have taken the first step on the path to ultimate redemption in the Showcase Showdown.

When they have settled in, the name of the All-Powerful One is finally intoned; the stage doors part, the congregation rises, and Bob Barker—High Priest of the Temple of Conspicuous Consumption—strides on stage, his impeccably tailored suit fluttering lightly in the breeze. His crop of snowy white hair lends him an aloof yet benevolent air. I am touched by the transformation of the man from the cynical, satanic persona I once saw on *Truth or Consequences* to this present magisterial incarnation. His canonization marks a minor triumph of one of America's greatest inventions: the *re*invention (see Reagan and Nixon).

Now, the emotion heightens another notch as ravishing models emerge to serve as Guardian Angels of the Sacred Treasure. Their semi-erotic enthusiasm for the first item—a trash compactor—is so compelling that it seems to lead the first group of bidders astray. Priest Barker subtly chastises them for their wayward bidding, and finally a devout Latin shopper triumphs and ascends to the altar. To prove that she is worthy of the Church's redemption, the Heavenly Host demands she recite her catechism: how much is this sunscreenhotsaucemiraclegrowsnugglefabricsoftenervclamint? She displays a woeful ignorance of the sacred pricing structures, but skillfully manipulates one of the Church icons—a golf club—to make a long putt, propitiate the gods, and win a red Subaru.

Two bidding rituals ensue and it's time for a major Church sacrament—the spinning of the Prayer Wheel. Manipulation of a giant wheel inscribed with numbers will determine which penitent has the best relationship with the Gods of Fate and will thus proceed to the Showcase Showdown. A hyperventilating Black Priestess, a stoic thirtyish male Initiate, and a pert Vestal Virgin in a short white dress all spin, under Host Barker's supervision. They spin for our sins, but regardless of whether our contestant wins—like the Vestal Virgin—the Host still wants us back; he bellows: "Write for tickets! Join me in Southern California—dream capital! Spiritual locus!"

Our next devotee arrives wearing a sexy halter-top, and a concupiscent gleam lights up Priest Barker's brow. Leering affably, he's the People's

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Priest—sexist and paternal. The Angels roll out a stove for the audience's adoration, along with some sacramental Rice-a-Roni (the Saint Francisco treat). Doris the grandmother bids last and wins. Overwhelmed with The Spirit, she can barely mount the stage and gets lost approaching the host. Alas, Doris loses at "Squeeze Play" and the general morale plummets, but cameras pan the crowd, "Applause" signs flash, and spirits soar once more. No place for depression in The Temple!

George ascends next. He sports a natty white moustache, white polyester clothes of the retirement sort, and long, roguish sideburns—the "Fallen Rector" look. In order to gain access to the Church treasury, he must acquire giant tablets by correctly bidding and skillfully drop them into a giant maze. But the Devil seems to have his paws on the huge wafers, for they all fall with a thud into worthless slots. The Rector slinks off, hoping for later redemption at the Big Wheel.

With no contests left, the cameras pan the losers, forcing them to assume courageous smiles while their paltry consolation prizes come up on the screen: Dessert-of-the-Month-Club memberships, multivitamins, and Fi-Bars with semidiscredited oat bran. We have one more go-around at the Giant Prayer Wheel and Doris triumphs. This means the Matriarch must confront the Vestal Virgin in the culminating ceremony.

Priest Barker now presides over the final and most austere ritual of the service—the Showcase Showdown. The first showcase is wondrous—Lakers season tickets, a computer, and a car. Will a bid of $12,500 get Doris into the *Sanctum Sanctorum*? The second showcase features the disconnected legs of a model emerging from a huge black bathtub, a bedroom set, and, finally, a houseboat.

By the grace of the Television Gods, the more photogenic Vestal Virgin bids closer to the mark and is declared the winner. Canned music swells and, with the bounty of the Church treasury as backdrop, we close out the service with High Priest Barker gazing out over his flock and joking contentedly with the nubile Temple Angels.

We viewers must now brace ourselves for a jarring descent from the sacred to the mundane—the midday news. Our only solace lies in knowing that approximately seven hours later we will be able to reconsecrate ourselves by observing the austere rituals involving another Sacred Wheel—this one presided over by the great goddess Vanna White.

Stephen Provizer writes from Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Guerrillas In Our Midst

by Sarah J. McCarthy

The L.A. Riots Remembered

Grappling with the meaning of the L.A. riots, wondering with Rodney King why we can't get along, I muse about days long ago when I was a terroristette for the women's movement. I cared so much about violence against women that, with a group of my sisters, I participated in a rampage of window-smashing, targeting theaters showing films such as *Dressed to Kill* and *He Knows You're Alone*. I know the thrill of the brick in the hand that smashes the plate-glass window of the oppressor. "I wish we would've known about this in high school," shrieked one of my cohorts, "this is fun!" We ran through the night spray-painting on streets we dare not usually walk, mini-looting by ripping off magazines from pornography stores, and chanting "We're together, we're not alone."

And so you see, I understand the terrorist impulse, or at least the terroristette one, for we would never have carried out such impulses had there been people—men or women—who had their faces or arms or jugulars cut by this rain of glass. The brick that crushes the human skull is what separates the terroristette from the full-blown variety. The rage that fuels the aggrieved rebel can be understood and indulged by society up to that point where the brakes are gone, restraint is thrown to the wind, reason and fair play are smashed, and the oppressed are transformed into monsters worse than the ones they are fighting. Too many blacks in America have reached that point.

I remember the precise moment when I first noticed that oppressed people transform themselves into monsters. It was when Arab terrorists aboard the *Achille Lauro* threw Leon Klinghoffer, helpless and wheelchair-bound, overboard into the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea. Enough, I said; I no longer cared a whit what nightmares of oppression had been suffered by these terrorists from the Middle East. A cheer rose from deep within me when Reagan put a missile through Muammar Al-Qaddafi's front door. Ronald Reagan and I knew we were looking at the face of evil, and we both had had enough. My antimilitary, anti-Amerikan-power stance melted away. This ex-Jane Fonda wannabe realized that American military power could be used for good as well as bad, used precisely to limit destruction, to remove surgically jets carrying terrorists from the skies.

The people of this great country should not be pistol-whipped and hit with a brick in the head by every punk with a grievance. We have been guilt-tripped enough—we have been sufficiently blamed and held responsible. We have had the word racist taped over our mouths like electrician's tape. The voices raised against black terrorism are now just a trickle, people tip-toeing gingerly on dangerous ground. The voices will rise to a crescendo as the terrorists become more and more outrageous, as the threats about wake-up calls and long hot summers become more disgusting, as the excuses and remorse of the "we are all responsible" apologists begin to sound more and more implausible. Many more will realize there is no appeasing the unappeasable, the permanently aggrieved.

A powerful metaphor for black guilt-tripping can be found in *Meridian* by black poet and author Alice Walker. Written before *The Color Purple*, Walker's book tells the story of a white woman, Lynne, who has gone South in the 60's to work for civil rights, where she marries a black man, Truman. Lynne and Truman have a black friend, Tommy Odds, who had his lower arm shot off in a demonstration. Because he was angry and people owed him and because Lynne was white, he wanted to make love to her. But Lynne was married to Truman and considered Tommy Odds only a friend. Walker writes:

> For of course it was Tommy Odds who raped her. As he said, it wasn't really rape. She had not screamed once, or even struggled very much. To her, it was worse than rape because she felt that

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circumstances had not permitted her to scream. As Tommy Odds said, he was just a lonely one-arm Nigger down on his luck that nobody had time for anymore. But she would have time—wouldn't she? Because she was not like those rough black women who refused to be sympathetic and sleep with him—was she? She would be kind and not like those women who turned him down because they were repulsed and prejudiced and the maroon stump of his arm made them sick. She would be a true woman and save him—wouldn't she?

. . . There was a moment when she knew she could force him from her. But it was a flash. She lay instead thinking of his feelings, his hardships, of the way he was black and belonged to people who lived without hope; she thought about the loss of his arm. She felt her own guilt. . . . She did not any longer resist but tried to think of Tommy Odds as he was when he was her friend—and near the end her arms stole around his neck, and before he left she told him she forgave him and she kissed his round slick stump that was the color of baked liver, and he smiled at her from far away, and she did not know him. "Be seein' you," he said.

I thought of these characters the morning I watched Spike Lee smirk and swagger on the *Today Show* about the 95 degree heat coming last summer. Spike told us once before about the coming 95 degree heat in *Do the Right Thing*, a movie that sneered at the workaholic pizza-shop owner who was stupid enough to open a business among the hang-loose black guys who were takin' a long time out smellin' the flowers. They were doing something fun, something that made sense. These home boys were definitely not bustin' their butt for chump change. If they needed money they'd just show up on "mother's day" to pick up the welfare check or go downtown to "work" at ripping off food from some Korean grocery stores. Spike Lee, egging on the home boys, says that pulling that white truck driver out of his truck and beating him senseless was no different than what happened to Rodney King. "It's the same video tape," he said. If the police officers are free, why should the brothers that beat the truck driver not be free, too? Surely a rich sophisticated movie producer like Spike Lee should be able to recognize the complexities of this issue if he really wanted to do the right thing. But he doesn't—he just wants to threaten and misunderstand like any adolescent with an appetite for destruction. Each and every night black men in every major city of this country are doing worse to each other than what was done to Rodney King. The Crips and the Bloods killed nearly one thousand people, mostly other young black men, on the streets of L.A. last year, making Willie Horton a statistically repetitive fact.

I sympathize with the competent professional Bryant Gumbel and other blacks as they squirm and recoil and agonize about these thugs, whose crimes they still mostly believe are our fault. It is more tolerable to blame it on white racism than on blacks who have gone bad, who have become corrupt and cynical and evil. We have been used to blaming white America for these things; and it has been less morally complex to blame them on lack of hope and money and role models. There is, however, a trickle of voices that are not buying these explanations, which have become excuses. Many of us are not accepting the blame or responsibility that is said to be ours. We will not tolerate murderous street punks being glorified into martyrs, victims, or revolutionaries as some of us did in the more innocent and naive days of the Black Panthers. Since then, I have heard black acquaintances laughing about getting their way by "playing poor little black boy" and sneering scornfully about whites "with their heads up their a----."

We watch the Crips and the Bloods on *Nightline*, and we and Ted Koppel are astounded at their intelligence and articulateness as they expound on their sociological perspective, which sounds incredibly like the platform of the Democratic Party. These are not some alien mutants as one might suspect upon hearing of their deeds; these men are con-artists. On *Oprah* they tell us they want money to build their version of Rodeo Drive. They tell us if *they* don't get the cash to rebuild L.A., they will torch it again the day the work is completed. I suspect they could buy and sell many of us with their bushel baskets of drug money. They are young, strong, muscular, and intelligent and have a fashion sense that is cutting-edge. Some look like GQ models in well-fitted suits, others prefer ghetto chic with green and purple psychedelic silk shirts. No one looks scruffy or poor. They wear tattoos on their faces to remember the people they have killed. They sprinkle their articulate university poli-sci rhetoric liberally with colorful, creative street lingo. It is difficult to imagine why they can't finish school and get a job except that the jobs are too boring and don't pay as much as the drug business.

In my neighborhood there is a little strip-mall with a Lebanese immigrant family's restaurant, a lady who sells chipped ham and eggs, a plumber, a hardware store, an auto-body supply shop, a pizza place, a Chinese restaurant, a dry-cleaner, and an exotic pet store where a young guy in his early 20's sells pot-belly pigs and tropical fish. Surely, the Crips and the Bloods could fix toilets or sell tropical fish. Looking at them, it is hard to imagine what they cannot do.

It is time for them to do the right thing, to quit selling drugs to kids, to go back home and raise their children, to finish high school and make use of the community colleges that the residents of California have so generously provided at a cost to students of only $90 per semester, to give up the con game of the permanently aggrieved, to quit being a shame and an embarrassment to their people, and to get a job. It is no less than what is expected of the rest of us. To demand any less would be racism.

Sarah J. McCarthy is a freelance writer living in Pittsburgh.

A Queer Car Ride

by Robert Knight

We were on the same plane out of Dulles, and he was two rows ahead. His head was shaven, except for a tuft at the very top. With large ears and long, bare cranium he looked like the Sesame Street character Bert, as in Bert and Ernie. Bert always looks worried, bored, and anxious, and so did this man. The television studio had sent a limousine to pick up both of us from the air-

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port. I got in first and was surprised to see him climb in after me. The young man settled in with the detachment of youths who want you to know that they're there but that they're, like, not *really* there. Like, they transcend limos.

He wasn't as sullen as Matt Dillon doing his awful James Dean impression, however. Despite the black-leather, street-hood look, this fellow seemed more likable. His eyes darted around the spacious interior and finally settled on me, the guy in a business suit. Our eyes met. "Hi," he said, offering the taut nod of a man on a mission. Thus began my half-hour trip from Kentucky into downtown Cincinnati with a member of the militant homosexual group Queer Nation. Their motto: "We're Here, We're Queer, Get Used To It."

I represent a pro-family think tank in Washington that differs with Queer Nation on anything that matters. A bigot, by their description. We were both to be guests on *The Gerry Springer Show*, the Cincinnati-bred clone of the *Sally Jessy Raphaël Show*, starring former Cincinnati Mayor Gerry Springer. I was to tape one show, and the man from Queer Nation was to tape a later one. He seemed to assume from the outset that I was a sort of coconspirator, since we were guests on a program known for its exploration of unconventional "lifestyles." Other shows taping that week included, according to the schedule in a producer's office: "Fat and Proud," "I Can't Get Over Elvis," "Phone Sex Killed My Hubby," and "Lingerie Fantasies."

The man from Queer Nation would debate a Los Angeles minister on the topic: "Is Homosexuality Curable?" I would play straight man in another freak show. That is, I was to tell America why it wasn't a good idea for fathers to wear dresses in front of their kids (show title: "My Dad Wears a Dress"). Why even do a show like this, you might ask? For the simple reason that in today's media circuses, gender confusion goes largely unchallenged. Those of us who believe in traditional values cannot afford to give the quacks a monopoly.

I told my fellow limo passenger that I would be on the "cross-dresser" show, and he seemed to take it at face value. He talked for a few minutes, denouncing "bigots," as he called the minister. Then I revealed my pro-family affiliation. "I'm your opponent," I said, speaking in a general sense. "But I'm not your enemy."

He looked at me without apparent hostility. "I don't hate homosexuals," I said. "I have friends who are gay. But I oppose the agenda of the homosexual rights movement. I don't want my kid taught in schools that homosexuality is a normal, healthy lifestyle. By any yardstick—especially public health—it's an unhealthy lifestyle. And I don't believe homosexuality is a permanent condition. Last week, I spoke with a woman who had been a lesbian for ten years. She is married now and counsels other people out of it. She says that homosexuality is 100 percent curable and that it stems from unresolved emotional disorders in people from dysfunctional families. I'd have to say that people like her give the lie to your contention that humans are necessarily gay from birth."

It was a mini-speech, but I had been listening to tapes from the L. I. F. E. Ministry in New York all week to try to better understand the phenomenon. L. I. F. E (Living in Freedom Eternally) counselors blend psychological techniques with spiritual instruction. They encourage homosexuals to reexamine their lives to determine what caused them to turn inward emotionally and to feel so little worth that they believed God Himself had rejected them. The mood is one of compassion, not judgment. (While the L. I. F. E. program operates on the assumption that all homosexuality is revocable, some groups, such as the Catholic ministry Courage, allow for the possibility that the impulse may be too difficult to shed completely but can be controlled.)

"I was born gay," the man from Queer Nation said vehemently. "I've always been gay. And it's better." He dismissed the woman I had mentioned by calling hers "an extremist view." He said the "gay life" was not only equal to that of "breeders" but actually superior, a more responsible choice in a world choking from overpopulation, pollution, and starvation. He accused "heteros" of causing all problems known to man. The words tumbled out, faster and faster, a torrent of clichés, threats, and slogans.

I waited until he paused, then asked: "So your parents were being irresponsible when they had you, then?" He ignored this and pressed on, warning of environmental collapse and problems brought on by "fear, greed, ignorance, and 'homophobia.'"

Suddenly it occurred to me that I probably shouldn't push too far. Queer Nation members were known to threaten violence, harass people, and destroy property. Academic colleagues had confided that they didn't dare appear unsympathetic lest they get AIDS-contaminated blood thrown on them. This kind of stuff sounds plausible in the abstract, but less so when you are sitting there talking with a real person. I felt no physical threat from the young man, who seemed more interested in flailing away at his own doubts. Using slogans as amulets, he warded off simple truths known to human beings for thousands of years. Families, he said, are "recent" inventions. There is no such thing as "normal." AIDS is not a "gay" disease at all, but is caused by "homophobia," etc.

"Let's talk about 'homophobia,'" I said. "'Homophobia' is a new word that has already undergone evolution for political purposes. It used to mean fear, hatred, and persecution of homosexuals. Now it means anyone or anything that doesn't go along with the homosexual rights agenda. 'Homophobia' is a smear that you use to silence your opponents. You're even using it against the Boy Scouts." His face changed expression, from pugnacious to lascivious. "I was a Boy Scout," he said with a nasty chuckle. "And I did it with my Scoutmaster. But it was okay, because I wanted it. I really wanted it. It was goooooood." He smiled and gazed upward. "You guys are going to lose this one," I said. "It would destroy the Scouts to bring in homosexuals."

The seriousness returned. "You're wrong," he said. "We are getting stronger all the time, and we will win. We are more than 10 percent of the population and growing." I shook my head. "No, I'm afraid you're not. The 10 percent figure comes entirely from the discredited Kinsey studies. You won't find it duplicated anywhere. Current studies show 3 percent tops, with some showing 2 or 1 or even less. These include surveys from the United States, Australia, and England."

He got angry. "That's a lie. There are lots of studies that show the 10 percent." "You mean like Bell and Weinberg?" I said, referring to two Kinsey disciples who published studies out of Indiana University, where the Kinsey Institute is situated. "They base a lot of their stuff on the Kinsey data. There

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are no data that come anywhere near Kinsey. And Kinsey's survey was fatally flawed. He used an enormous number of convicts, many of them sex offenders. He used hundreds of male prostitutes. He prowled the gay bars in search of people with the most bizarre stories. If you don't believe me, you can check the biography by Kinsey's co-author, Wardell Pomeroy."

The first hint of uncertainty flickered in the queer warrior's eyes. I began to feel sorry for him. He honest-to-goodness did not know he had been fed a pack of lies by the homosexual movement, the same lies that the media has been echoing for the past four decades.

My mind reeled. How many politicians live in fear of the phantom 10 percent of voters that might retaliate if homosexual activists are not appeased? How many parents acquiesce to public school indoctrination of their children in anal sex at the behest of sex educators wielding the Kinsey statistics? How many homosexuals waste away, believing they can't change? How many know that homosexuality might not have to be the sole or defining element in their lives?

The limo pulled up to the studio, and we exchanged final volleys. As I got out of the car, I looked at my opponent, who was strangely reticent. Had I convinced him of anything? No. I had no illusions about that. Without having seen his show taped, I have little doubt that he went in and socked it to the L.A. pastor. How could he not, having so much stake in it? The queer warrior made me think of Stanley Baldwin, of whom Winston Churchill said (and I paraphrase): "Stanley occasionally stumbles over the truth. But he always manages to pick himself up and hurry on as if nothing had happened."

Since he did not have to tape for a couple of hours, the queer warrior asked the limo driver to take him to his hotel. Just before the door closed, he said goodbye, and his arm flinched, as if he were about to offer his hand but thought better of it. I did the same. Then we looked at each other for a second and put out our hands. If this were scripted by liberal bleeding hearts, we would then have hugged and begun to sing "We Are the World." No, there wasn't any phony camaraderie, but it was clear there was no enmity either. And that may have surprised both of us. I know it surprised me. These guys look scary on the evening news. We shook hands, and the limo drove off.

I walked up the steps into the studio, turning my thoughts to the bizarre men in dresses who would share the stage with me. One would bring a son, another his wife, and a third his fiancée. The audience would be drugged with the usual rhetoric of ultratolerance, and I was to play the role of the bigot. At least, that was the set-up. It wasn't fair, but that was O.K. Somehow, I was now more confident that just telling the truth in this strange age may be enough.

Robert Knight is director of the Cultural Studies Project at the Family Research Council in Washington, D.C.

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Bread and Circuses: The Politics of Welfare—February 1992—Allan Carlson on how federal housing policies have contributed to the breakup of the family, William Murchison on the doctor and the state, and Christina F. Jeffrey on Social Security as family policy. Plus Barbara McCarthy on welfare and illegal immigration, and Jeffrey Tucker on Housing and Urban Development.

Faces of Eve: Goddess, Starlet, Poetess—March 1992—Janet Scott Barlow on the devolution of women on the screen, Thomas Fleming on marriage as the real right to privacy, and R.S. Gwynn on American women poets. Plus Betsy Clarke on the politics of rape, Anne Marie Morgan on the new technology of fertility control, and Kenneth Craycraft on Mary Ann Glendon's *Rights Talk*.

The Spanish Americas—April 1992—Richard Estrada on the Hispanic contributions to American culture. Mario Vargas Llosa on the difficult rise of the Latin American novel, Chilton Williamson, Jr. on bullfighting in Juárez, Mexico, and poems by Jorge Luis Borges. Plus Brad Linaweaver on Albert Jay Nock, William Murchison on LBJ, and Murray Rothbard on violence in New York City.

Law and Order: Crime and Punishment—May 1992—Thomas Fleming on the role of the executioner, Philip Jenkins on the drug war and personal liberties, Graeme Newman on the case for corporal punishment, and Theodore Pappas on vigilante justice. Plus Murray Rothbard on street crime. Llewellyn Rockwell on vagrancy law, Richard Irving on taxi drivers and minority crime, and a firsthand account of life in prison.

Restoring the Republic—June 1992—Clyde Wilson on the republican approach, Samuel Francis on the nationalist approach, and E. Christian Kopff on the Augustan compromise. Plus Thomas Fleming on why we have the government we deserve, Theodore Pappas on Japanese-American trade, Chilton Williamson, Jr. on illegal immigration, and Murray Rothbard on repudiating the national debt.

Citizenship—July 1992—John Lukacs on patriotism, Richard D. Lamm on why great nations need great citizens, Richard Flathman on four models of citizenship, and Peter Schuck and Rogers Smith on why citizenship should be based on consent and not birth. Plus Thomas Fleming on the rebirth of nationalism, and Samuel Francis on the Buchanan Revolution.

Reactionary Modernism—August 1992— Thomas Molnar on Céline and French reactionary modernism, Peter J. Stanlis on Robert Frost, J.O. Tate on Wyndham Lewis, and Larry Woiwode on Dos Passos. Plus David R. Slavitt on the novels of 1991, Justin Raimondo on Ayn Rand as plagiarist, Bill Kauffman on Sinclair Lewis, and Chilton Williamson, Jr.'s review of R. Emmett Tyrrell's *The Conservative Crack-Up*.

Rotten to the Core: American Colleges—September 1992—Thomas Fleming on literature and the curriculum debate, Robert Weissberg on the life of a campus conservative, E. Christian Kopff on a true classical curriculum, and student reports on political correctness at the University of Florida, Grinnell College, and Georgetown University. Plus Laura Rogers' exposé of the Parents as Teachers program.

1492: Italians and America—October 1992—Christie Davies on blaming Columbus, E. Christian Kopff on Margaret Fuller in Rome, Chilton Williamson, Jr. on pseudoscholarship about Columbus, and Samuel Francis on *The Godfather* as political metaphor. Plus Thomas Fleming on the changing frontier, David R. Slavitt on Lorenzo Da Ponte, and Thomas O. Jones on Columbus' descendants.

Ain't Freedom Grand: The 1992 Election—November 1992—Donald Warren on the empty voting booth, William J. Quirk on the unrepresented middle class, Thomas Fleming on the Electoral College, James S. Fishkin on deliberative polling, and Samuel Francis on the passivity of the electorate. Plus Allan Carlson on proportional representation, and Theodore Pappas on Martin Luther King, Jr.'s early plagiarisms.

Ten Commandments—December 1992—A round-table discussion on the Decalogue—by Thomas Molnar, Gary North, Frank W. Brownlow, Allan Carlson, Jacob Neusner, Theodore Pappas, Murray Rothbard, E. Christian Kopff, Harold O.J. Brown, and George Garrett. Plus Philip Jenkins on the panic over priestly pedophilia, Sally Wright on Malcolm Muggeridge, and William Wilson on C.S. Lewis.

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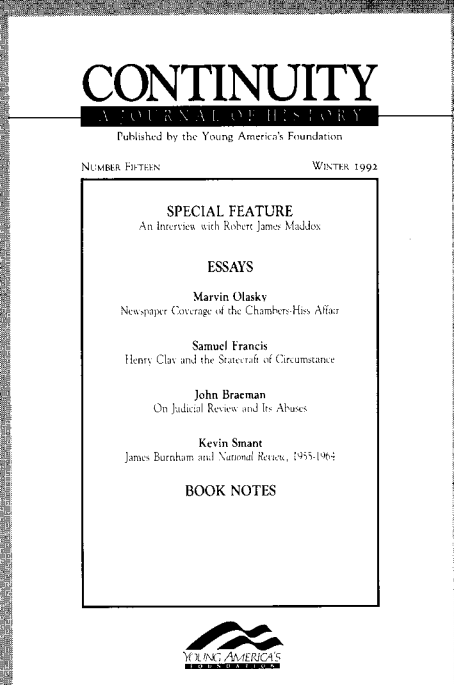
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